

TASS assails Pakistani comments

MOSCOW (R) — The official Soviet news agency TASS said on Sunday that Pakistan's foreign minister had "turned the facts upside down" by insisting that the withdrawal of Soviet troops remained a serious obstacle in Afghan peace talks. TASS reiterated that Soviet forces, which Western estimates put at 115,000 troops, would move out "as soon as an end is put to foreign interference in that sovereign country's affairs." Pakistani Foreign Minister Sahabzada Yaqub Khan said Saturday that last week's Geneva talks through a United Nations intermediary had made some progress but serious difficulties remained over the question of Soviet troop withdrawal. "The statement by the Pakistani minister is evidence that the Pakistani authorities are clearly trying to turn the facts upside down," TASS said. It accused Pakistan of "broadening the scale of interference in Afghanistan's affairs."

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordanian Press Foundation
جوردان تيمز يومية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الاردنية «الراي»

Haj Hassan returns after Tunis talks

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Labour and Social Development Khaled Al Haj Hassan returned to Amman on Sunday at the end of a visit to Tunis where he took part in a meeting by Arab ministers of social development and held talks with Tunisian officials on cooperation with Jordan in social affairs. In their two-day meeting, the ministers discussed a number of issues related to social development in the Arab World, and decided to extend assistance to those Arab countries which were hit by drought and famine, Mr. Haj Hassan said. He said the meeting also endorsed a technical assistance programme to families in North Yemen and urged Arab states to attend an international conference on social development to be held in Japan in August 1986.

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Prince Mohammad visits army division

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Mohammad, the personal representative of His Majesty King Hussein, on Sunday visited the Fourth Royal Armoured Division and inspected the various sections of the unit. The division's commander briefed Prince Mohammad on the progress of work of the division in line with royal directives. Later he visited the Prince Mohammad Brigade and was briefed on the brigade's activities and training and watched an exercise performed by the brigade.

Iraqi agriculture minister arrives

AMMAN (Petra) — Iraqi Agriculture Minister Siddiq Abdul Latif arrived in Amman Sunday evening on a two-day visit to Jordan. He will meet with the Jordanian counterpart Ahmad Dahqan and other officials to discuss a number of matters connected with cooperation in agricultural affairs. Mr. Abdul Latif is also scheduled to visit a number of agricultural projects in Jordan.

Experts discuss alternative energy

KUWAIT (R) — Arab oil experts met here on Sunday to discuss action to develop proposals for alternative and renewable sources of energy, the Kuwait News Agency (KUNA) said. The proposals, the result of an Arab energy conference in Algiers last May, include a study aimed at introducing nuclear energy and a search for uranium in the Arab World, it said. It quoted the secretary-general of the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), Ali Attia, as saying energy was the Arab World's only commodity with long-term export potential.

'Coup plotters wanted to kill Babangida'

LAGOS (R) — The plotters of a coup foiled last week planned to kill Nigeria's military leader, General Ibrahim Babangida, with a bomb planted on his plane, the independent newspaper Sunday Tribune reported. The paper said the coup plotters had enlisted the support of senior air force officers to plant the bomb. Other targets were the number two, Commodore Ebitur Ukiwe, and army chief General Sami Abacha, it said. Western diplomats said a court martial in Lagos was already trying the alleged plotters and it seemed punishment would be swift.

Heart transplant patient dies in Poland

WARSAW (R) — Poland's third and longest-lived heart transplant patient, Zygmunt Chruszcz, died on Saturday 39 days after his operation, the Polish news agency (PAP) said. Chruszcz, 25, died of pneumonia at the provincial cardiology clinic in the southern town of Zabrze, he showed no signs of having rejected his new heart, the agency said. Poland's first heart transplant patient 16 years ago died during the operation and the second after six days last November.

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Jordan-Syria rapprochement has had no negative impact on Amman-Baghdad ties — Ramadan

By Lamin K. Andoni
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Iraq's first deputy prime minister, Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadan, said on Sunday that the recent improvement in Jordanian-Syrian relations has had no negative impact on the strong and brotherly relations between Jordan and Iraq, and "we expect those relations to grow even stronger in 1986."

In an interview with the Jordan Times and its sister Arabic daily Al Ra'i during his two-day visit here, Mr. Ramadan said he did not want to speculate on the possible impact on the Arab scene of full normalisation of relations between Jordan and Syria, but said the improvement in ties between Amman and Damascus "has had no negative impact on our strong and brotherly relations" with Jordan.

"On the contrary, we are working with Jordan to improve our relations further, and expect the year 1986 to witness substantial growth in the volume of trade and economic exchange," said Mr. Ramadan.

The Iraqi leader disclosed that an Arab reconciliation team, which has been formed at an extraordinary summit in Casablanca

last August, has failed so far to achieve any steps towards reconciling Iraq with Syria.

"There have been no results at all," was Mr. Ramadan's comment when asked about efforts by the committee to heal the rift between the two countries.

Differences between Iraq and Syria, which are ruled by rival wings of the Arab Baathist Party, stem from Syria's support of Iran in its war against Iraq. The rift also covers a number of other political issues including Syria's opposition to the leadership of Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) Chairman, Yasser Arafat, the Syrian role in Lebanon and Iraq's relations with Egypt.

Mr. Ramadan, who headed his country's team to an Arab League-sponsored reconciliation meeting with Libya in Rabat last

month, denied reports that an Iraqi-Libyan rapprochement was in the offing.

"Iraq maintains a principled position on relations with Libya," he said. Iraq severed diplomatic relations with Libya last June after Tripoli announced that it would sign a strategic alliance agreement with Iran.

Mr. Ramadan, who delivered a message to His Majesty King Hussein from Iraqi President Saddam Hussein on Saturday, described his two days of talks with Jordanian officials as "very positive."

He said that the year 1986 will witness a substantial growth in the volume of trade and economic exchange between the two countries. "We have also agreed that the higher Jordanian-Iraqi committee should meet once a year to follow up and review the development of relations and cooperation between the two countries," he said.

Mr. Ramadan said that his visit to Jordan was in response to a Jordanian invitation. The visit was preceded by a visit by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan to Iraq two weeks ago, during which he held talks with President Hussein and visited the Iraqi warfront.

Mr. Ramadan accompanied President Hussein in the Iraqi leader's visit to the Soviet Union since the Iran-Iraq war broke out in September 1980. Mr. Ramadan

said that the visit was "successful" and "Iraqi-Soviet relations are developing in all fields."

"But our relations with the Soviet Union are still below our expectations," he said. He did not elaborate but said that both Iraq and the Soviet Union "have identical views and evaluations of the Iranian regime and on Iran's aggressive policies."

"The Soviet Union expressed full support for Iraq's efforts to find an end to the war through peaceful negotiations," he said.

The Iraqi leader said the Soviet Union "will play a more effective role in efforts to seek an end to the war." He refused to give more details but said that the Soviet Union "knows what it could do" to contribute to peace efforts in the Gulf.

Reports from Moscow and Iraq last week said that Iraq had sought advanced Soviet weapons. Mr. Ramadan did not deny or confirm these reports but indicated that Iraq was very satisfied with the results of last week's talks concerning its needs for weapons.

"The Soviet Union has become our main source of weapons and there are no problems over that issue," he said.

He said President Hussein also discussed the Palestinian question with the Soviet leadership. "The

(Continued on page 2)

British embassy wants contacts with kidnappers

BEIRUT (R) — Britain's ambassador in Lebanon on Sunday appealed to the captors of journalist Alec Collett to contact the embassy after they sent a video tape of the missing Briton to a Beirut newspaper.

"I would like to ask the kidnappers to contact the British embassy or (British church envoy) Terry Waite for humanitarian reasons," Ambassador John Gray told An Nahar newspaper.

Mr. Collett's captors delivered a video tape to An Nahar on Saturday, in which the 63-year-old journalist asked British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher to help obtain his release.

"We are studying the message carefully," Mr. Gray said.

Apparently reading a text, Mr. Collett urged Mrs. Thatcher to give "utmost consideration" to demands for the release of Arabs and Muslims in British jails made by the self-styled "Revolutionary Organisation of Socialist Muslims."

Mr. Gray told An Nahar the video was authentic and said he was at the disposal of the kidnappers if they wished to speak to him. The tape was the first news of Mr. Collett since another video tape reached his family in May, two months after his kidnapping.

Mr. Collett was on assignment for the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees (UNRWA) when he was seized.

Mr. Waite, on his third trip to Beirut to intercede with the captors of four Americans, has also said he would like to meet the group holding Mr. Collett.

Acting Archbishop of Canterbury Robert Runcie, Mr. Waite dropped out of sight for the second day Sunday as he pursued his mission in secrecy.

The kidnapping of the U.S. hostages — Catholic priest Lawrence Jenco, journalist Terry Anderson, university professor Thomas Sutherland and hospital director David Jacobson — was claimed by anonymous callers for the "Islamic Jihad" (holy war) group.

Islamic Jihad said in October it had killed U.S. diplomat William Buckley, but his death has not been confirmed. It claimed the kidnapping a year ago of a sixth American, librarian Peter Kilburn, but has not mentioned him for months.

Mr. Jenco, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Jacobson and Mr. Sutherland appealed to President Reagan to get them home by Christmas in a letter released on Nov. 8.

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Cheysson visits APC, development projects

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Sunday accompanied visiting European Community (EC) envoy Claude Cheysson on a tour of a number of industrial and agricultural projects in the southern parts of Jordan to provide him with first-hand information about the Kingdom's development projects.

Prince Hassan and Mr. Cheysson first called at the Arab Potash Company (APC) at Ghor Safi and neighbouring facilities where they were briefed on the potash extraction process, obstacles facing its development and future targets, the Jordanian News Agency, Petra, said.

APC Director-General Omar Abdullah outlined the activities of the plant, its capacity and operations.

The Crown Prince and Mr. Cheysson, member of the Executive Commission of the EC in charge of North-South relations, visited agricultural projects in South Ghor.

Jordan Valley Authority (JVA) President Munther Haddadin briefed them on a major project currently being implemented by using drip irrigation.

Later Prince Hassan and Mr. Cheysson visited Aqaba and were briefed future plans and those underway to develop Aqaba city as well as projects being implemented to promote the port city in the industrial and tourist fields.

Mr. Cheysson was received in audience by His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday. He also held a series of meetings with Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and senior officials on efforts for peace in the Middle East.

In a lecture he delivered at the World Affairs Council Saturday evening, Mr. Cheysson said the EC was "available to the Arab World" whenever it was needed. But the European Community's reaction towards developments in the Middle East depended on what was initiated in the region, he said.

However, he said, the Arabs were not telling the EC enough on what Europe could do to help the peace efforts.

The EC envoy is expected to hold a press conference in Amman before leaving for Cyprus on Monday.



Prime Minister Zaid Rifai and Iraq's first deputy premier, Mr. Taha Yassin Ramadan, sign an agreement on Jordanian-Iraqi cooperation on Sunday (Petra photo)

Jordan, Iraq to boost trade exchange to \$750m in 1986

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan and Iraq on Sunday agreed to raise the volume of trade exchange between the two countries to \$750 million in 1986 and drew up a comprehensive programme of action to boost bilateral cooperation in all fields, including trade and economy, agriculture, industries and energy.

Under a protocol signed here on Sunday, a higher committee and various sub-committees were jointly set up by the two countries to implement the programme of action.

Under the agreement a higher committee, co-chaired by Prime Minister Zaid Al Rifai and Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan, has been set up to undertake the task of planning future economic cooperation.

The committee will be helped in its task by a joint team headed by concerned ministers from the two countries to follow up the implementation of projects the two sides agree on.

The two sides also agreed to set up sub-committees to handle economic, trade, industrial, energy, transport, communications, cultural, and technical cooperation. These sub-committees will hold meetings every six months.

Mr. Rifai and Mr. Ramadan signed the agreement and later exchanged speeches on the occasion.

Mr. Ramadan voiced his deep happiness for his meeting with His Majesty King Hussein on Saturday and his talks with Mr. Rifai during his visit and expressed satisfaction with the outcome of the Jordanian-Iraqi talks. He said agreement has been reached on holding periodic meetings of the Higher Iraqi-Jordanian Joint Committee, and this reflects both countries' keen interest on promoting bilateral cooperation.

Mr. Ramadan said Iraq pledges to remain faithful to the close brotherly ties with Jordan and its people.

Mr. Rifai replied by saying Jordan and Iraq will continue to march along the same path that had been outlined by King Hussein and Iraqi President Saddam Hussein.

"The higher committee has been entrusted with the work of fulfilling the aspirations of the two leaders, and translating them into concrete results that can benefit the whole Arab Nation, and we hope that we will succeed in this mission," Mr. Rifai said.

Iraqi Minister of Transport and Communications Abdul Jabbar Al Assadi and Minister of Industry and Trade Rajai Al Muasher signed minutes of the joint Iraqi-Jordanian committee which held meetings in Amman between Dec. 19 and Dec. 22.

The minutes provide for the following:

— Both countries undertake to increase the volume of exchanged trade between them to \$750 million in 1986, and to increase the annual quota of the Jordanian and Iraqi trade centres in Amman and Baghdad to JD 20 million each.

Iraq will purchase Jordanian eggs, tomato paste, vegetables for processing purposes, raw cotton and potash in addition to those commodities included in a list agreed on in earlier meetings. Jordan will purchase a variety of Iraqi products, mostly matches, crude oil, oil products, fertilisers and dates.

— The two countries will conclude a protocol on cooperation in energy-related affairs and the Iraqi side has agreed to extend the mandate for an Iraqi team conducting seismological surveys for oil-prospecting in Jordan for another six months.

— Both sides voiced their satisfaction with executive steps so far taken in transport affairs and both agreed on conducting comprehensive feasibility studies for promoting cooperation in land, sea and air transport.

— Both sides noted with satisfaction the serious steps so far taken by the Joint Iraqi-Jordanian

(Continued on page 3)

Libya assails U.S. protest on missiles

TRIPOLI (Agencies) — Libya on Sunday dismissed U.S. protests over its acquisition of long-range anti-aircraft missiles, accusing the United States of creating "a constant atmosphere of terror."

The Libyan news agency JANA said the American reaction to reports that the Soviet Union is installing surface-to-air (SAM)-5 missiles in Libya demonstrated "this tyrant approach in her policy."

"America acts as if it had the right and means to attack others and protests against them if they possess means to defend themselves against her acts of aggression," JANA quoted the Libyan Foreign Ministry as saying.

The Foreign Ministry statement described the missiles' purpose as "the defence of the Gulf of Sirte (Sirta) and Libyan internal territorial waters."

The Washington Post reported on Saturday that the ground-to-air missiles "are being installed at two locations in the North African nation, and could hit targets 240 kilometres away."

That would include possible U.S. reconnaissance planes flying over the Gulf of Sirte, which Libya considers its territory but which the United States contends falls in international waters.

The Post said the SAM-5 is the longest range anti-aircraft weapon the Soviets have given to Libya, though previous SA series missiles with a range of up to 65 kilometres have been installed.

The Gulf of Sirte is where U.S. F-14 fighters shot down two Soviet-built Libyan warplanes in 1981. U.S. officials said they were attacked by the Libyan planes, but Libya denied the allegation.

The U.S. State Department termed the news of the new missiles a "dangerous escalation" of the military links between the Libyans and Soviets.

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The Washington Post quoted State Department spokesman

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Libya, Syria to seek urgent Arab talks on Israel's links

BEIRUT (R) — Libya and Syria are to call an urgent Arab League meeting to discuss the restoration of diplomatic relations between Israel and certain African countries, the official Libyan News Agency, JANA, said Sunday.

The agency said the decision came at a meeting in Tripoli Saturday night between Libyan Foreign Minister Ali Abdul Salam Al Tureiki and his Syrian and Iranian counterparts, Farouq Al Shara'a and Ali Akbar Velayati.

JANA quoted Mr. Tureiki as saying he had agreed with Mr. Velayati to add the subject to the agenda of an Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) meeting to be held in Morocco next month.

The Ivory Coast last week renewed diplomatic ties with Israel,

severed after the 1973 Mideast war, and Israeli Prime Minister Shimon Peres said he expected four other African countries to follow suit.

In a despatch from Tripoli on Mr. Velayati's talks Saturday with Mr. Tureiki, the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted the Iranian minister as saying "Iran and Libya are so closely tied that an attack against either of them is equally an attack against the other, and to defend either of the two countries would be to defend the other as well."

The Libyan minister said Iranian-Libyan relations were expanding "at a high level" and Mr. Velayati said they had been improved by a series of exchange visits.

Gaza merchants stage strike

OCCUPIED WEST BANK (Agencies) — Arab merchants in occupied Gaza Strip staged a strike on Saturday in protest against heavy taxes levied from them by the occupation authorities. On Thursday the Israeli authorities stormed Arab business establishments and forced their owners to pay large amounts of money and also confiscated a large quantity of jewels.

In Ramallah in the West Bank, an Israeli military court on Saturday sentenced Mahmoud Assad Deeb, 16, and Mahmoud Hamed, 15, both from the Dheisheh camp, to eight years imprisonment for allegedly attacking Israeli patrols with petrol bombs.

Another Arab citizen, Khaled Ali Saleh, 22, from Qalqileh, was also sentenced by the same court to four years imprisonment for allegedly belonging to the Palestinian liberation movement and resisting the Israeli occupation.

In Gaza, an Israeli military court sentenced Jaber Metlag Weshah, 35, from Al Bureij camp, to life imprisonment for allegedly taking part in several anti-Israeli operations, acquiring arms and killing an Israeli intelligence man.

Following a meeting with lawyer Jawad Poles at Ramallah military court, four Arab prisoners disclosed that a group of Israeli wardens stormed one of the prison's rooms at midnight last Sunday and attacked 13 Arab detainees.

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Violence thwarts Mideast peace hopes in 1985

CAIRO — A spate of hijacks, bombings and political murders thwarted efforts in 1985 for peace between Arab states and Israel.

By John Rogers

At the end of a bloodstained year, the Middle East peace process was dormant, with Arab states themselves divided on this and other issues.

In the Gulf, the war between Iran and Iraq, estimated to have cost half a million lives, sputtered into a sixth year.

The 10-year-long civil war in Lebanon rumbled on, claiming more than 3,200 lives this year. Neighbouring Syria pushed hard to broker a peace pact between Lebanese militias to stop the violence.

As the United States continued to give Israel unwavering support, the Soviet Union raised its diplomatic profile in the region, establishing diplomatic relations with Oman and the United Arab Emirates, and China promoted ties with Arab nations.

Amid the mayhem of 1985, Saudi Arabia sent the first Arab astronaut into space aboard the U.S. shuttle and Jordan carried out the first heart transplant in the Arab World.

Efforts by Arabs to make progress towards long-term peace with Israel were pipped for most of 1985 on the Feb. 11 accord between Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) and Jordan.

Many countries backed the idea of an international conference involving the superpowers to try to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict after four wars in the last 37 years.

But hopes founded in a swirl of violence, cross-currents in Arab politics and steadfast American

murdering three Israelis on a yacht in a September raid. In "retaliation," Israeli warplanes bombed PLO headquarters in Tunis, killing more than 60 people in a widely condemned attack.

Cyprus was hit by other killings and bombings rooted in the Middle East conflict and Lebanon's feuds, prompting President Spiros Kyprianou to urge friends in the region not to turn the island "into a field of violence."

In Kuwait, the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, escaped an assassination attempt in May when a suicide car bomber rammed his motorcade.

Civil war drags on

Lebanon's civil war dragged on, with savage battles between rival militias exacting a high toll in the divided capital Beirut and other cities like Tripoli. Some 450 people, mostly innocent civilians, died in car bomb attacks.

Some 300 foreigners were kidnapped and up to 12 — six Americans, four Frenchmen, a Briton and an Italian — were still missing. Pro-Iranian extremists are believed responsible for most of the abductions.

Moscow was stung by Lebanon's violence for the first time when four Soviet embassy officials were kidnapped. One was killed and the others were held for a month.

In southern Lebanon, Israel said it withdrew the bulk of its forces to end a three-year occupation. But it still patrols a self-styled "security zone" and has to contend with suicide bombers.

The Lebanese economy also took a battering, the pound plan-

ning 50 per cent against the U.S. dollar in the year.

Other Middle East countries were beset by economic problems, with Gulf oil producers sliding into recession because of falling oil prices.

The Iraqis were trying to choke off Iran's oil exports by flying more than 50 bombing raids on the main Kharg Island terminal.

By year-end, Iran was reported preparing for a major ground offensive after the two countries launched inconclusive missile and air strikes against each other's cities in the spring.

But there was no sign of either side gaining a decisive military advantage. Gulf and other mediation efforts made no apparent headway.

A serious breach in Arab ranks was patched up when the Arab League helped reconcile Jordan and Syria, estranged for four years over the Gulf war, Arafat and peace moves with Israel.

But the league made little progress mending fences between Iraq and both Syria and Libya, which support Iran in the Gulf war. And tension flared between Libya and Egypt.

The Egyptians suspected a Libyan hand behind the Malta hijack and put troops on the alert along the Libyan border.

The political rifts forced Saudi Arabia to delay an Arab summit planned to host in November.

Five countries, including Syria and Libya, boycotted an extraordinary summit in Casablanca last August. Egypt was not invited because it was suspended from the Arab League for signing a separate peace treaty with Israel in 1979.

Egypt indicts alleged Libyan agents

CAIRO (AP) — The prosecution has indicted and referred to court eight alleged Libyan agents on charges of plotting subversive acts to destabilise the Egyptian government. Cairo newspapers said in Sunday early editions.

The indictment called for the execution of seven of the eight who are all Egyptians, according to newspapers' reports which failed to mention the prosecution's demand for the eighth person.

The newspaper Al Akhbar said meanwhile that prosecutor Ragaa Al Arabi, has also demanded the arrest of seven of the defendants, indicating they were released by a lower court after they were arrested last March.

A list of names published by the Cairo daily Al Akhbar showed that two of the defendants escaped the country but neither the published indictment nor the list specified the names of those wanted for arrest.

The report could not be verified immediately due to the late hour here.

The indictment said the defendants communicated with Libya's intelligence service for undertaking subversive acts in Egypt and sought to recruit other Egyptians for receiving training in Libya on the use of explosives and other weapons in return for money.

In disclosing their arrest on April 1, the state-owned Middle East News Agency said that authorities had monitored the group's activities and contacts with Libyan intelligence, both in Egypt and abroad for seven months before cracking down on them.

The agency said Greece, Turkey and Libya were scene for the groups' contacts with Libya.

Libya has been accused of sending saboteurs to Egypt to destabilise its government since the 1970s when Col. Muammar Qadhafi's offer to merge his country with Egypt was rejected.

Warrants were issued last week for the arrest of three Libyan officers and four other Libyans were indicted in connection with a plot to kill two Libyan political refugees in Egypt last month.

Famine aid trucks arrive in bad condition

ASSAB, Ethiopia (R) — Forty-three trucks donated by the British rock charity Band Aid to transport famine relief supplies arrived at this Red Sea port in a dilapidated condition, United Nations official Burk Oberlee has told Reuters.

Mr. Oberlee, who is in charge of monitoring the handling of relief supplies at Assab, said the trucks, bought second-hand and unloaded from ships here, would need major maintenance.

Israeli Arabs demonstrate against discrimination in municipal funding

NAZARETH, Israel (AP) — More than one thousand Israeli Arabs staged a protest march in the city where Jesus lived to threaten a general strike against discrimination in municipal funding.

The crowd, led by four mayors of Arab towns and villages, protested inequalities in the distribution of government funds to municipalities and local councils, and what it believed to be a Jewish takeover of the Galilee, Nazareth's mayor Tewfik Zayyad told the Associated Press.

There have also been several clashes between villagers and government officials and police carrying out the demolition of houses built illegally in Arab villages. The Arab Council leaders charged that the houses are illegal only because the Interior Ministry is unreasonably refusing to approve the town plans.

Another grievance was what the protesters called the "confiscation" of Arab-owned land by the government for new Jewish villages and for military training areas. "We are citizens here, too. We have no other homeland," Mr. Zayyad said.

Mr. Zayyad warned that the 700,000 Israeli Arabs will walk off their jobs if the government does not stop the alleged discrimination in allocating money to local councils.

"We would paralyse everything," Mr. Zayyad warned, pointing to the strike's effect on agriculture, industry and construction work throughout the country. Arab citizens make up about one-sixth of the country's population of 4.2 million. Another 1.5 million Palestinians live in the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip.

He did not indicate a date for the threatened strike, or how long it would last. But he said he and other Arab mayors planned to meet with Prime Minister Shimon Peres on Wednesday, Christmas Day, to try to ease tensions between the Arab population and the government.

The Arab mayors have already met with Mr. Peres twice in the past year, but Mr. Zayyad complained that "we received nothing but promises."

Carrying placards, one reading "Equality And Rights For Arabs And Local Councils," the marchers ended with a rally at the Greek Orthodox Church, stopping just short of the city's Jewish neighbourhood where armed border police were stationed.

Chinese minister arrives in UAE

ABU DHABI (R) — Chinese Foreign Minister Wu Xueqian arrived here from Cairo Sunday for a three-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and talks expected to focus on political and economic cooperation, Chinese embassy officials said.

Official talks between Mr. Wu and UAE Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Rashid Abdullah were expected to cover the Middle East problem and the Iran-Iraq war, they said.

They would also cover economic cooperation and ways to boost ties between the two states, which established diplomatic relations a year ago.

Chinese Vice-Premier Yao Yilin signed an economic accord with his UAE counterpart Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammad during a visit here last month committing both sides to expand trade and explore joint ventures which could

cover oil, foodstuffs and tourism. Despite ideological differences with Peking's Communist government, the UAE applauds its long-standing support for the Palestinian cause.

Mr. Wu, on a five-nation Middle East tour has visited Iraq, Jordan, Syria and Egypt. A Chinese embassy official said Mr. Wu would leave here on Dec. 24 and fly to Dhaka for a short visit to Bangladesh before returning home.

Iran says it will halt offensive if U.N. names Iraq as aggressor

TEHRAN (Agencies) — Iran's volunteer call-up for a new Gulf war offensive would stop if the United Nations named Iraq an aggressor nation, responsible for war reparations, Iran's parliamentary speaker said.

The Islamic Republic newspaper Salam said Speaker Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani told troops on their way to the war front: "The U.N. must accept that the Iraq is the aggressor and is responsible for all the war damages, and must declare to the world that the Iraqi regime has to pay war reparations to Iran."

Iran claims about \$200 billion in reparations from Iraq for damage caused in the five-year old war.

Mr. Rafsanjani, who is also the spokesman for Iran's Supreme Defence Council, added: "If you, as the U.N. or Security Council say this, then we would not feel the need to mobilise our people from across the country and despatch them to the fronts."

Tens of thousands of Iranian "Basij" volunteers have been sent to front lines over the past three months and diplomats say Iran may have as many as two million troops massed to attack.

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Mr. Rafsanjani, who is also the spokesman for Iran's Supreme Defence Council, added: "If you, as the U.N. or Security Council say this, then we would not feel the need to mobilise our people from across the country and despatch them to the fronts."

Tens of thousands of Iranian "Basij" volunteers have been sent to front lines over the past three months and diplomats say Iran may have as many as two million troops massed to attack.

Referring to the Soviet abstention on a United Nations vote on concern over alleged violation of human rights in Iran, he said: "We hope the Soviet leaders, who in the U.N. vote on the resolution about Iran proved they can be realistic, will continue on this course."

"We favour the continuation of the two countries' relations in the framework of peaceful co-existence."

Iranian leaders have recently been warning that a major offensive against Iraq is imminent. Diplomats in the Iraqi capital, Baghdad, estimate that as many as half a million Iranian troops have massed along the frontier.

In Iran itself "Carbala caravans" of volunteers depart daily for the front from cities throughout the country after elaborate departure ceremonies broadcast by the state television. Carbala is a city in Iraq considered as their major shrine by the "Shi'ite Muslims of Iran, the country's predominant religious group."

Iran's appeal to the Security Council was made through a letter by Mr. Aziz, addressed to the U.N. Secretary General. The text of the letter was released at the U.N. Headquarters in New York.

The letter said that Iran intends to launch "an extensive and large-scale offensive with the aim of occupying Iraqi territory and of threatening Iraq's national sovereignty."

"For a number of weeks the Iranian leaders have continually announced their intentions of doing so and boasted of the personnel and equipment they are mobilising."

Ramadan: Closer Jordan-Syria ties has had no negative impact

(Continued from page 1)

president stressed Iraq's support of the PLO, under the leadership of Arafat, as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people," Mr. Ramadan said. He said that the Soviet Union will play a greater and more effective role in efforts to solve the Palestinian problem. He did not elaborate.

Baghdad has become a major location for the PLO leadership to meet and reports have suggested that the organisation will move its headquarters to the Iraqi capital.

Mr. Ramadan denied any knowledge of such information. "There is no political significance for the PLO's meetings in Baghdad," he said.

Mr. Ramadan said Iraq "will not interfere in the PLO's decisions and will not try to talk the PLO into accepting United Nations Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338." Iraq has never said it accepts these two resolutions.

Mr. Ramadan said, however, that Iraq respects the PLO's decision and "will not try to patronise the organisation."

"It is unlikely that the Iranian leaders will stop the war, from which they derive their raison d'être," he said.

Mr. Ramadan said Iraq has no plans to take a unilateral decision to restore diplomatic relations with Egypt. "Restoring diplomatic relations with Egypt is an Arab decision and should be done through an Arab League resolution and should be preceded by negotiations between the Arabs and Egypt on the latter's relations with Israel," he said.

Iraq's approach to relations with Egypt, as outlined by the Iraqi leader, is based on intensifying contacts and cooperation, particularly in the economic field, with Egypt in order "to gradually rid Egypt from the situation it is in," Mr. Ramadan was referring to the 1979 Camp David peace accord which Iraq categorically rejects.

He refused to say whether Iraq would support an Arab decision to readmit Egypt to the Arab League but stressed that "efforts to bring Egypt back to the Arab fold are not necessarily linked to the readmission of Egypt to the Arab League."

"In our view, all of us (the Arab countries) should help Egypt return to the Arab fold through strengthening relations with Egypt on bilateral basis," he said.

Libya assails U.S. protest

(Continued from page 1)

Charles Redman as saying delivery of the missiles, the most advanced in Libya's armoury, was a "significant and dangerous escalation in the Soviet-Libyan arms relationship."

"This clearly exceeds any legitimate security requirements the Libyans have," the newspaper quoted him as saying.

"America," the Foreign Ministry statement said, "is orientated by self-deception and arrogance, and acts as if the globe were a ball in her hand and under her foot which doesn't belong to all mankind."

It said American protests over Libya's acquisition of the missiles "for solely defensive purposes" contradicted "the U.S. acquisition of long-range missiles, aircrafts and fleets to threaten the security of other peoples, rock their stability and impose a constant atmosphere of terror on them."

TV & RADIO

JORDAN TELEVISION Tel: 773111

MAIN CHANNEL 17:00 News Summary 17:20 Cartoons 17:30 Different Strokes 17:45 Programme on the Armed Forces 17:50 News Programme 17:55 Tomorrow's Programmes 18:00 News in Arabic 18:05 Arabic Series 18:10 Tomorrow's Programmes and Varieties 22:00 Arabic Film 22:30 News in Arabic 23:10 Film continued

FOREIGN CHANNEL 18:00 La chance aux chansons 18:30 Jean Pinot, Méditerranée d'aujourd'hui 19:00 News in French 19:20 Magazine Sportif 19:30 News in Hebrew 20:00 News in Arabic 20:30 Three Up, Two Down 21:00 Craft Design Tech. 21:10 Bergamot — Last episode 22:00 News in English 22:15 Murder, She Wrote

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07:00 Light Music 07:30 Newsweek 07:45 Morning Show 10:00 News Summary 10:05 Pop Session 12:00 News Summary 12:05 Pop Session Contd. 13:00 News Summary 13:05 Pop Session Contd. 14:00 News Bulletin 14:10 Instruments 14:15 Over a Cup of Tea 15:00 Concert Hour 15:05 News Summary 16:00 News Summary 16:30 Old Records 17:00 The 15th Century A.H. 17:30 Pop Session 18:00 News Summary 18:05 Sports Round-up 18:15 Sports Feature 19:00 Newsweek 19:30 Date with a Star 20:00 Evening Show 21:00 News Summary 21:05 Evening Show Contd.

WHAT'S GOING ON

TODAY'S EVENTS

EXHIBITIONS

A painting exhibition by Khalid Kharas at the Spanish Cultural Centre (until Dec. 30).

A flower arrangement exhibition (flowers made of ceramics, copper, plastic, silk) by Yusra Abu Ghazal at the Royal Cultural Centre (until Dec. 30).

An exhibition of water colour paintings and graphics at the Fine Arts Association (until Dec. 27).

SEMINAR

A seminar on the role of the mass media in cultural movement in the Royal Cultural Centre.

CULTURAL CENTRES

Royal Cultural C. 6610267 American Centre 644371 British Council 641520 French Cultural Centre 637009 Goethe Institute 641993 Soviet Cultural Centre 644203 Spanish Cultural Centre 624049 Turkish Cultural Centre 639777 Hays Arts Centre 665195 Hussein Youth City 6671816 Y.W.C.A. 641793 Y.W.M.C.A. 664251 Amman Municipal Library 637111 University of Jordan Library 843555

MUSEUMS

Palatium Museum Jewellery and costumes over 100 years old. Also no need from Madaba and Jerash (4th to 18th centuries). The Roman Theatre, Amman. Opening hours: 9.00 a.m. - 5 p.m. Year-round. Tel. 651760.

Jordan Archaeological Museum: Has an excellent collection of antiquities of Jordan. Jabal Al Qal'a (Cliffed Hill). Opening hours: 9.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. (Fridays and official holidays 10.00 a.m. - 4.00 p.m.). Closed Tuesdays.

Jordan National Gallery: Contains a collection of paintings, ceramics and more. A picture by contemporary Islamic artists from most of the Muslim countries and a

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Alia information department at the Queen Alia International Airport tel. (08) 33200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

08:25 Kuwait (RJ) 08:45 Cairo (RJ) 08:45 Muscat, Dubai (RJ) 09:45 Amman (RJ) 10:00 Damascus (RJ) 10:00 Abu Dhabi, Bahrain (RJ) 12:45 Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ) 13:25 Dhahran (RJ) 13:45 Kuwait (RJ) 15:10 Jeddah, Medina (RJ) 17:20 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ) 18:15 Beirut (MEA) 18:35 Cairo (MS) 18:45 Bangkok (RJ) 18:30 Baghdad (RJ) 08:25 Baghdad (RJ)

DEPARTURES

06:45 Damascus, Athens (OA) 06:45 Frankfurt (OH) 07:30 Vienna, Chicago, Los Angeles (RJ) 11:30 Larnaca, Paris (RJ) 12:15 Frankfurt, Copenhagen (RJ) 13:30 Bahrain, Abu Dhabi (RJ) 14:25 Jeddah (RJ) 14:30 Kuwait (RJ) 15:40 Medina, Jeddah (RJ) 16:00 Cairo (MS) 19:30 Kuwait, Dhahran (RJ) 19:45 Bahrain, Doha (RJ) 20:00 Damascus (RJ) 20:15 Baghdad (RJ) 20:15 Jeddah (RJ) 20:30 Baghdad (RJ) 20:45 Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ) 21:15 Abu Dhabi, Doha (RJ)

MARITIME TRAFFIC

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WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

As a depression centred over Cyprus is approaching our area, it will be partly cloudy to cloudy, with scattered showers. A drop in temperature is expected with southeasterly moderate winds. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy, with chances for scattered showers. Winds will be southerly moderate and rough sea.

Amman 4/19 Aqaba 6/16 Deraa 1/9 Jordan Valley 6/16

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 12, Aqaba 19. Humidity readings: Amman 63 per cent, Aqaba 40 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NOS.

EMERGENCIES

Amman government 891228 Amman civil defence 198, 199 Civil Defence Unit 271293, 273131 Civil Defence Qumach 770733 Ambulance 195, 775111 Amman downtown fire brigade 198 First aid 630441 Blood bank 778303 Civil Defence rescue 661111 Fire headquarters 622090-3 Police rescue 192, 621111, 637777 Police headquarters 639101 Traffic police 896390/1 Electric Power Co. 636381/4, 624881 Manakab water complaints 771258 Queen Alia Int. Airport (08) 333046/6

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN: Dr. Khalid Abu Khamis 770468 Dr. Mufid Tamoush 88494/4 First pharmacy 661912 Nairoth pharmacy 623672 Karamallah pharmacy 666093 Saleh pharmacy 888728 Marwan pharmacy 642209 Abu Sharif pharmacy 770595

TAKES: Jerusalem taxi 639655 Khalid taxi 623715 Orob taxi 846838 Sami taxi 666955 Sayah taxi 843265 First taxi 841085

IRBID: Dr. Sita Qasrawi (—)

ZARQA: Dr. Fakh 981923

GENERAL

Jordan Television 773111/19 Radio Jordan 774111/19 Ministry of Tourism 642311 Hotel complaints 666176 Pines complaints 661776 Telephone Information 12 Jordan and Middle East calls 10 Overseas calls 17 Repair service 11

MARKET PRICES

(Fixed prices for imported produce)

Upper/lower price in fits per kg

Apple 250/225 Garlic (with leaves) 320/280 Beet 140/110 Garlic (without leaves) 480/400 Chestnut 160/100 Onion (dry) 180/140 Coconut (each) 500/450 Potato 190/140 Sage (green) 350/300

NEWS IN BRIEF

Royal Decree appoints two new senators

AMMAN (Petra) — A Royal Decree was issued Sunday appointing Radi Al Abdullah and Barjas Al Hadid as new members of the Upper House of Parliament. Their membership will take effect as of Dec. 16, 1985, the Decree said.

Al-Masri receives ambassador-designate

AMMAN (J.T.) — Foreign Minister Taher Al Masri received in his office Sunday Mr. Terry Goggin, new Australian ambassador-designate to Jordan and received from him a copy of his credentials. Mr. Goggin succeeds Mr. Richard Gate, who had served as Australian ambassador to Jordan since 1983.

Ramadan praises CAEU efforts

AMMAN (Petra) — Visiting Iraqi Deputy Prime Minister Taha Yassin Ramadan paid a visit Sunday to the Council of Arab Economic Unity (CAEU), where he discussed with CAEU Secretary General Mahdi Al Obeidi the various activities of the council. Mr. Ramadan stressed the important role which the CAEU is playing and the tasks it is doing with the aim of strengthening joint Arab economic action and achieving Arab economic integration. He also stressed the role of specialised Arab organisations in this field to support joint Arab efforts. Accompanying Mr. Ramadan on his visit were under secretary of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry Noori Ismail and the Iraqi Ambassador in Amman Ghafel Hussein Jassem. The Iraqi deputy prime minister arrived here Saturday to chair meetings of the higher Jordanian-Iraqi joint committee.

U.S. professor lectures on information

IRBID (Petra) — Dr. Joe S. Foote, professor of journalism and communications at Cornell University in the United States, currently visiting Jordan, met Sunday with the members of staff and students at the Journalism and Mass Communications Department at Yarmouk University. Dr. Foote delivered a lecture in which he spoke about the future of public relations and information technology as well as modern communications techniques and their importance. He also dealt with information and its impact on personal and individual freedom, stressing the importance of live T.V. transmission via satellite.

World Bank to finance Zarqa college

AMMAN (Petra) — The World Bank is to grant Jordan \$7.044 million loan to establish a nursing college in Zarqa, according to an agreement signed at the World Bank's headquarters in Washington, D.C. The signing of the agreement came in a cable to the Health Ministry from the World Bank. The loan will be used to finance the construction and furnishing of the new college.

DLDNA organises exhibition in valley

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Department of Libraries, Documentation and National Archives (DLDNA) will organise an exhibition of documentary photos at the Ma'addi Social Development Centre in the Jordan Valley with the aim of highlighting aspects of social life in the central Jordan Valley. The event will be held to mark National Documents and Archives Week, Dec. 26-31.

Jordan, Iraq to boost trade to \$750 million in 1986

(Continued from page 1)
Industrial Company to commence activities. They also endorsed a draft agreement on technical and scientific cooperation drawn up between the Natural Resources Authority of Jordan and the Iraq's General Establishment for Minerals.

— Both sides agreed on launching cooperation in fish breeding and fish farms and expanding co-

operation in protected agriculture (plasticulture) and drip irrigation and producing veterinary vaccines and ways for protecting plants.

Mr. Assadi had earlier met with Minister of Transport Farhi Obeidi to make an assessment of land transport operations between Iraq and Jordan.

Later the two ministers co-chaired a general assembly meeting of the Jordan-Iraq Land Tra-



Ministry of Trade and Industry Under Secretary Mohammad Al Saqqaf (second from left) and Under Secretary of State of the Egyptian Ministry of Eco-

nomy and Foreign Trade Dr. Yahya Al Jamal (second from right) sign a trade exchange protocol in Amman Sunday (Petra photo)

Jordanian-Egyptian protocol calls for \$100 million increase in trade in 1986

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan and Egypt are to increase their level of trade exchange to \$250 million next year, up from \$150 million in 1985, in accordance with a protocol the two sides signed in Amman Sunday.

The protocol, the ninth to be signed by the two countries in the course of implementing a bilateral trade and economic cooperation agreement signed in 1967, also provides for exempting each other's goods from import duties and for allowing their trade centres in Cairo and Amman to sell goods worth up to \$15 million, according to the Jordanian News Agency, Petra.

Petra said that trade exchange will be financed by freely con-

vertible currency and would be conducted by the private or public sectors in accordance with laws in either country, provided that the private sector's quota in each should not be less than \$25 million, in implementation of resolutions passed by the Jordanian-Egyptian Higher Joint Committee on Trade Affairs.

Agreement on the quotas of each commodity traded between the two countries will have to come from the ministers of trade in Egypt and Jordan, and letters of credit can be opened throughout the whole year, in accordance with the agreement. The two sides agreed to remove all obstacles impeding the promotion of trade between them at all ports of entry and

agreed to encourage an exchange of visits by trade and other officials to conduct trade negotiations, Petra said.

The protocol was signed by Mr. Mohammad Al Saqqaf, under secretary of the Ministry of Industry and Trade and Dr. Yahya Al Jamal, under secretary of the Egyptian Ministry of Economy and Foreign Trade.

The signing of the protocol came at the end of week-long talks held between the two officials, accompanied by aides and officials from their respective ministries.

Jordan normally exports medicine, chemicals, textiles, plastics, machinery and household goods to Egypt and imports rice, textiles, clothing and building materials.

TCC to begin phase two of expansion

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan will soon embark on a second phase of extending modern telecommunications services to rural regions with French assistance, according to Ministry of Communications sources. The sources expect work on the new phase to start early in 1986.

News about the implementation of the project was announced by Minister of Communications Muhieddin Al Hussein upon his return Saturday night from a visit to France at the head of an official delegation which included Mr. Mohammad Shabeh Ismail, director general of the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC).

Mr. Hussein said that the pro-

ject will be financed from a 460 million French franc long-term loan.

He said his visit to France was to discuss the commencement of the new phase now that the first phase of the project has been completed in the rural regions of the Kingdom.

According to Mr. Hussein, a French firm has set up seven electronic telephone exchanges and microwave networks to offer telephone services to 153 towns and villages in the country.

During the visit to France the delegation toured a number of plants which manufacture telecommunications equipment and looked into the prospect of using

some of the equipment in the course of implementing the TCC's five-year plan.

U.S.-Israeli free trade to weaken Arab boycott

AMMAN (Petra) — The establishment of a United States-Israeli free trade zone is bound to weaken the current Arab measures on boycotting Israeli goods and would lead to a strengthening of the Israeli economy, according to a Jordanian memorandum to be submitted Tuesday to the 63rd meeting of the Federation of Arab Chambers of Commerce, Industry, and Agriculture in Muscat.

The memo points out that once the U.S.-Israeli project is implemented it would be difficult to define the source of goods invading Arab markets and the agreement would help Israel boost its exports in the whole world.

A number of American manufacturers have protested against the move for fear of an Arab boycott, but were overpowered by the strong Israeli lobby in the United States, forcing the American administration to sign an accord on establishing the zone, the memo said.

Such agreement would also create jobs for many Israelis inside Israel at the expense of American workers and industries, according

to the memo.

The memo pointed out that the terms of the agreement are not balanced, because while the United States undertakes to remove all control on the entry of Israeli goods for 10 years until the free trade zone agreement comes into force, Israel will not follow suit, but will retain the right to protect its industry as this industry will continue to receive government subsidies.

The memorandum said Israel has already signed a three-year agreement with the European Economic Community designed to increase Israeli exports to community member nations.

The memorandum also pre-

sented a number of recommendations which it said would be useful to confront the U.S.-Israeli economic merger, and curb Israel's escalating aggression on the Arab Nation.

The memo suggested that Arab countries should tighten restrictions imposed on Israeli goods, preventing any of them from entering the Arab World. It also urged Arab chambers of commerce to support their respective Arab governments in abiding by the regulations and rules on boycotting Israeli goods, and to launch public awareness campaigns in this matter. The memo also urged Arab governments to refrain from establishing normal relations with Israel and to boost the work of joint Arab-foreign chambers of commerce in their endeavours to maintain a strict boycott against Israeli products. The memo urged Arab countries to lay down a unified strategy to shield Third World markets from Israeli goods and work towards bolstering joint Arab economic action leading to a total economic integration.

Czech scholar returns home

AMMAN (J.T.) — Dr. Zdeek Meuller, an eminent Czech scientist, left Amman on Sunday to return to his country after a three month research mission here within the framework of a bilateral cultural agreement for the exchange of intellectuals.

Dr. Meuller is working at the Orient Institute in Prague, which is affiliated with the Czech Science Academy. The institute was established in 1916 and has launched pioneering research and studies on orientalism.

Mufti issues fatwa on burial

AMMAN (Petra) — The General Mufti of Jordan Sheikh Izzeddin Al Khatib Al Tammami issued a fatwa (judgment) on a number of matters concerning the burial of the dead.

He said that it is forbidden to

use vans with loudspeakers playing the Koran to carry the dead during a funeral or while carrying the dead to be buried, since this would associate the Holy Koran only with dead people and with tones of sadness and grief.

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ANNOUNCEMENT

A meeting will be held at the auditorium of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, opposite Arab Bank Head Office, Shmeisani, to celebrate the birthday of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah on Dec. 25 at 5 p.m. Pakistani citizens are cordially invited to attend.

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Christmas street peddlers take on New York's 5th Avenue

By Ed McCullough
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — With Christmas approaching, the sidewalks of New York's most fashionable streets are overflowing with peddlers hawking everything from radios and toys to fake designer watches and handbags.

The flourishing trade, often done with an eye out for an approaching policeman, has created a huge bazaar outside Fifth Avenue's gleaming show windows and exclusive boutiques, from which established merchants denounce the vendors as frauds and threats to their businesses.

"Cashmere here, only five dollars," shouts a man standing over dozens of scarves strewn on a blanket on the sidewalk below a glass skyscraper. "People, what you see is all there is, so pick 'em out before they're gone."

Around the corner, Arnaldo Santos, a 28-year-old Brazilian, stacks his impressionistic paintings against the wall of a stone building next to the Museum of Modern Art.

"I sold one for six hundred dollars," he says, which is more than his drawings used to fetch at outdoor exhibits Sundays at the Praca da Republica in Sao Paulo. "This is a good place to be."

The furriers, jewellers, booksellers and perfume and wine merchants who have long made Fifth Avenue their home also like the area, and in part because they pay hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in rent and taxes, some would like to see the street vendors removed.

Peddlers damage a product's image by selling low-quality imitations, says Michael Grosso, executive director of the Fifth Avenue Association, a merchants group. They cause congestion outside stores, he said, and have an unfair advantage in that many don't pay rent or taxes.

The vendors, who set up their cardboard boxes and foldout tables virtually side by side outside the boutiques, are "an eyesore, an embarrassment to the city... a blight... a cancer," Grosso says. William Roisen, assistant vice president at Rolex, complains that peddlers selling counterfeit Rolex watches stand almost right on his store's doorstep.

"One of the reasons they sell them here is to give the impression they got them from us," Roisen says, referring to watches selling for 40-80 dollars, or thousands of dollars less than the genuine article.

"They're fakes coming out of Taiwan, junk from beginning to end," he said. "One of these days these people will be brazen enough to sell 100-dollar bills for 50 dollars."

Vendors have long been a familiar sight in New York. But at Christmas, when holiday shoppers flock to the city, the peddlers come in strength from their usual spots outside subways and stores throughout the metropolis of more than 7 million.

Fifth Avenue, always bustling at lunchtime and rush hour, now is so crowded that walkers often must step into the street to get around the knots of customers gathered around a vendor draped with pearl necklaces, or watching rubber spiders thrown onto store windows crawl creepily down.

"We've estimated there are probably a couple of thousand illegal vendors, who have not applied for licenses or who sell in areas that legally are off limits," said Lt. Robert Louttit of the police department's peddlers unit.

"At Christmas, there are guys who come here at five in the morning to get a space," said Fred

Gurner, a photographer who works next to Santos, the Brazilian painter.

Food vendors also see a potential bonanza in the thousands of people — tourists, theatre-goers and office workers as well as Christmas shoppers — who daily pass through the centre of New York.

Screaming brakes and honking horns compete at nearly every intersection with the sizzle of food plopped onto a burning griddle or into hot oil.

I started with falafel (ground chick peas) and added baba ghanouj (eggplant) to get more business," says Mohammad Zohry, retired Egyptian soldier. "I think vegetarian food is for everyone — Indians, Jews, Muslims. I am a Muslim."

Despite laws that regulate street vending and prohibit the sale of counterfeit merchandise, police have found that summonses, confiscation of goods and even coordinated "sweeps" with health and immigration officials have done little to stem the tide.

"We have a very large Senegalese population right now," Lt. Louttit said. "They seem to have become the dominant group."

"They're a little craftier than others," he said, noting that the Senegalese adapted quickly to police clampdowns by moving frequently and keeping only a few goods in sight so as to prevent large-scale confiscations.

The scarf seller, an American who identified himself only as "Steve," acknowledges that the designer shirts, leg warmers and umbrellas he also sells are counterfeit or of low quality, and his scarves aren't cashmere.

"Sure they're fakes, but they're good fakes," he said after bundling the unsold scarves into a plastic garbage bag and getting ready to move to another location, for fear of having his goods confiscated, as he said has happened before.

The competition on the streets is fierce. Peddlers jockey and sometimes fight for the same piece of territory; they undercut each other's prices, and strive to stock whatever item or fad looks most marketable.

A lot of the merchandise is legitimate, Lt. Louttit said. It is not stolen, but purchased by the dozen or crate from wholesalers elsewhere in the city.

The tail of Halley's comet, now more than 1.5 miles long, is seen in this 12-minute exposure taken on Dec. 9 by U.S. naval astronomer Richard Schmidt from a dark site near Marshall, Virginia. Visible below the Great Square of the constellation Pegasus, the comet was 67.6 million miles from Earth when the photo was taken.

Halley's comet showers promoters with riches

By Robert Kearns
Reuters

WASHINGTON — After an absence of three quarters of a century, Halley's comet is appearing on distant horizons and showering riches on those smart enough to look up to the heavens for help in turning a tidy profit.

One may have to wait until the comet's next showing in 2061 or 2062 — it arrives every 76 years on average — for a chance to cash in on the bonanza, however, since the merchandising of its present visit has already been cornered by entrepreneurs.

"Halley fever," the marketing experts call it — the once-in-a-lifetime chance to make millions selling everything from binoculars and telescopes to tee-shirts, "guidebooks" on the myth-shrouded comet and silver commemorative coins.

There is even a drink called Comet Cola in the works. Halley's comet luxury cruises and trips up a Peruvian mountain are being offered to those who want a better view than their neighbours and can afford it. (Because of the comet's orbit and earth's tilt, the view from the southern hemisphere will be decidedly better, according to the experts.)

The comet is gleaming faintly in the skies again for the first time since 1910. It will grow from a tiny speck of light to the size of a bright star with a glowing tail 50,000 miles long as it races along at 118,000 miles an hour and vanishes behind the sun in January.

It will reappear in March and April with the most spectacular viewing in March when, astronomers say, its tail will look like numerous moons placed side by side.

This awesome celestial event may cap the careers of some astronomers, seize philosophers with wonder and brighten the memories of sky-watchers the world over — but for businessmen like Owen Ryan it is the sales opportunity of the century.

Ryan is getting cheques from manufacturers of dozens of comet-connected items as a result of a brainstorm inspired by the commercialisation of the 1984 Los Angeles Summer Olympics.

There were "official olympic shirts, official olympic this, official olympic that," he recalls with a laugh. "So I became the official representative of Halley's comet."

His general comet industries, based in New York, cornered the Halley's comet trade mark for various products and markets an "official" comet logo for such products. Randy Rothman, a Ryan associate, says sales will include science kits, night shirts, tee-shirts, crossword puzzles, jewellery, coins and lunch boxes distributed by a U.S. fast-food chain.

She says there are proposals for comet dolls, watches and plastic helmets to protect heads from comet debris.

Caps, jackets, cocktail glasses and a "comet cocktail" to go in them, "comet cereal" and "comet creeper" shoes are also under Ryan's financial umbrella.

He has called for an "international Halley's comet day of harmony" on April 11, 1986, when the comet will be closest to earth. He is sending schoolchildren 200,000 stickers to publicise the event and is "urging everyone to do something to promote peace and harmony, like visit an old-age home."

Burt Rubin, a Ryan friend, also sees glittering possibilities for the comet and its message. Head of Halley Optical Corp of New York, Rubin suggested that Ronald Reagan and Mikhail Gorbachev open their Geneva summit meeting last month by peering through a telescope at the comet as "a symbol to the world of the beginning of a very positive summit... with something 'common to us all'."

Although they did not take his advice, Rubin expects thousands of others to pay \$180 each for his "HalleyScope" telescope.

Telescope and binocular sales have soared. Many astronomers say binoculars will give the average sky-gazer a better and cheaper view than narrower-field telescopes since the comet sprawls across the sky unlike a star or planet.

Tasco, a Miami telescope firm with markets in 60 countries, says business is the best in its history. Rita Glassman of Tasco says suppliers in Asia are already having trouble meeting demand for viewing devices and factories are going all out.

"How do you plan for an event that you have never experienced?" She replied when asked why the industry should be surprised about skyrocketing demand since Halley's comet has reappeared regularly for over 2,000 recorded years. (The Smithsonian Institution here is marking the return with exhibits that include a 12th-century manuscript of the comet and a mural in which its 1301 visit was portrayed as the Star of Bethlehem.)

Glassman says earth last had a telescope shortage 10 years ago with the arrival of comet Kohoutek, which is not due back for about 75,000 years.

Interest in Halley's has swept travel firms, which are planning: — London-based safaris, accompanied by astronomers, to Botswana and Rwanda in Africa, for the well-heeled to get a good look at the comet. The cost for an eight-day swing from New York to London and on to Africa is \$3,900.

— Luxury ship cruises at up to \$6,000 a head from Florida to such prime spots as Yucatan in Mexico, the Amazon in Brazil and a ten-day cruise in Australia's central desert where, promoters hope, the travellers will join thousands of Japanese tourists and amateur astronomers.

— For the more budget-conscious, a series of brief British Airways flights on moonless December nights, including a glass of bubbly wine, for less than \$100 each.

Proving the adage that there is little new under the sun, Swiss hoteliers profited from the last Halley's appearance in 1910 by staging midnight comet-watching dances high in the Alps with halloon rides accompanied by astronomer-lecturers.

In that year, too, a New York entrepreneur sold gas masks to help people escape fumes supposedly generated by the comet.

And salesmen in Paris sold "comet pills" and "comet gowns" to housewives frightened by Halley's allegedly evil effects and its trail of poisonous gas. Some people that year jumped in the Seine to avoid being roasted by the fiery fallout they expected.

There are "comet pills" this time around, too, but in today's health-conscious age they contain vitamins and are coated with yoghurt, not sugar.

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English-language Pravda attracts Americans' interest

By Dan Oberdorfer
Reuters

ST. PAUL, Minnesota — When Charles Cox began toying with the idea of publishing the first English-language edition of Pravda, the official newspaper of the Soviet Communist Party, he thought most of his subscribers would be scholars and librarians.

He was only partly right. For instance, a southern California barber's shop wants to offer its waiting customers Pravda alongside the glossy magazines Playboy and Penthouse.

Professional offices across the United States are ordering the newspaper as a curiosity for the coffee table.

Writers on a popular television comedy want a subscription to provide an infusion of fresh humour into their skits.

They and other customers will pay \$630 a year (\$810 in Europe via airmail), a far cry from the four kopeks (five U.S. cents) charged per copy for the daily in the Soviet Union.

Cox, a retired publisher of Roman Catholic journals, has been planning the English version of the official organ of the central committee of the Soviet Communist Party for two years.

The idea came from his son, who was trying to come up with a productive way for Cox to keep busy after retirement.

Initial mailings of the newspaper are to begin at the end of this year. Cox declined to say how many subscribers he has lined up, or how many he needs to make the venture profitable.

"It's about the only window we have to Soviet society that we can just pick up," Cox told Reuters. "You can get a picture from this

that's tough to get anywhere else." Without any assistance or endorsement from the Soviet Union, Cox undertook market studies and hired part-time translators, and will soon begin production seven days a week.

Cox said he has had some informal contact with Soviet officials — he declined to say exactly who — after trial runs and "the feedback we get is that our translation is very good." Moscow, he said, has not complained.

The original version of Pravda, for which Cox pays \$34.50 a year just as any other U.S. subscriber to the original Soviet version would, arrives in St. Paul by airmail every day.

When his English operation is running at full speed, Cox plans to send his subscribers weekly batches of the newspaper about 10 days to two weeks after the Soviet

Randa Habib's
Corner

Merry Christmas

WAS it because of the rain, or because morale was not high enough that there were not as many Santa Clauses in the streets as there used to be.

Even the few that we could see were not as attractive. First of all, I think that slim-Santas should be banned. A real, good Santa is a fat one, with a big belly and a cheerful face. The others should better be kept indoors.

One of the most exciting gifts children like to receive on the days preceding Christmas, are Christmas stockings: sealed, filled with sweets and decorated with small Santas, or with sparkling stars. Those stockings were part of the habits of Christmas and we cannot imagine it without them.

I was shocked to notice that all the stockings that I got for the children around me, or those bought by my friends, were filled with sweets bearing expired dates. The latest expiry date on them was November. The others varied between September and October and some even expired in June.

This is absolutely scandalous. Christmas is a symbol of love and caring. But for some people, it seems, it is high time for cheating. I don't think that it is very dangerous to consume a chocolate bar, which expired a month ago, but the fact remains that those sweets should have been withdrawn from the market after their validity expired. Unfortunately what happened that instead of destroying all that outdated stuff, as the law states, merchants found a way of making profit in a devious manner.

Who can guess what a goodlooking stocking, displayed in a supermarket, is carrying inside?

By the time the buyer discovers the hoax, it is too late to complain. What a dirty trick to play against children on the eve of Christmas.

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Newspaper spots flaw in World Cup soccer draw

LONDON (R) — The four third-placed nations from the six preliminary groups who survive the opening stages of next year's World Cup Soccer Finals may include the team which performs worst, a statistical study said Sunday.

The study, which appeared in the Sunday Times under the heading "Blunder In The World Cup... What Went Wrong," was researched by three eminent statisticians.

Instead of all six third-placed teams enjoying an equal chance of qualifying for the second round on the basis of their first phase results, the report said the format of the draw produced an imbalance.

The Sunday Times said the chances of the third-placed teams from the six groups advancing to the second stage — which in the

ory should be 67 per cent — were as follows:

Group A: Italy, Bulgaria, Argentina, South Korea — 47 per cent.

Group B: Mexico, Belgium, Paraguay, Iraq — 85 per cent.

Group C: France, Canada, Soviet Union, Hungary — 54 per cent.

Group D: Brazil, Spain, Algeria, Northern Ireland — 54 per cent.

Group E: West Germany, Uruguay, Scotland, Denmark — 75 per cent.

Group F: Poland, Morocco,

Portugal, England — 85 per cent.

The study said the contrasting percentages comes about because of the way the International Football Federation (FIFA) have allocated the four places available to the best third-placed nations.

Places will go to the best placed teams from the groupings ACD, ABF, CDE and BEF.

If, for example, A are to qualify, they will have to do better in terms of points, goal difference and goals scored than C and D, or, if they fail on that count, better than B and F. Thus A will be competing against four teams.

B, however, only has to be better than A, F or E.

According to the report, this format means that the third-placed teams from B and F could finish with the worst record and

still qualify for the second round.

For example, if B is better than A and F, and E better than C and D, F will be guaranteed a second round place no matter their record.

The Sunday Times report concludes that the format is weighted so heavily against A that even if the team finishing third in that section were to have the fourth-best record they would only have a one-in-five chance of qualifying.

Overall, a computer study shows the six third-placed teams can finish in 720 different orders.

The four best qualifying in 372 of those, but the other 348 combinations would see one or more teams going through with worse records than one of the eliminated nations.

Senegal, Mauritania win in basketball games

ABIDJAN (R) — Mauritania and Senegal recorded their second wins in two games here Sunday in the 13th African Basketball Championships.

Mauritania beat Nigeria 85-84 and Senegal beat Guinea 102-60. The two are now well placed to qualify as the semi-finalists from Group B.

On Saturday night Mauritania narrowly beat Mozambique, while Senegal beat holders Egypt on Friday.

The results almost certainly mean Guinea will not make the semi-finals.

Before a capacity 8,000 crowd Saturday night, the Guineans, who replaced Algeria in the tournament at the last moment and only arrived in Abidjan Saturday morning, unexpectedly won the first half 37-36 against Nigeria.

Clearly exhausted in the second half, Guinea eventually lost by 87-68.

A powerful and tall Congolese team easily disposed of a disorganised Kenya 118-60 while, in an exciting contest, Mauritania narrowly overcame Mozambique 67-66.

In the other game played Saturday night, Angola, losing finalists in the last African championships, were too strong for Central African Republic and won decisively, 102-84.

Olympic gold medallist weds in ring

VIRGINIA BEACH, Virginia (AP) — Pernell "sweetpea" Whitaker, the Olympic gold medallist whose injured foot denied him a boxing match Saturday, settled for a love match instead.

Whitaker was married in the ring at the Pavilion Convention Centre to Rovanda Anthony following a boxing card that included four of his medal-winning colleagues from the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles.

Surrounded by a sea of red dresses and white tuxedos and standing on a blue canvas, Whitaker and his bride, both clad in white, exchanged vows as members of the audience applauded and cheered.

Mark Breland, one of the Olympic medallists who fought before Saturday's ceremony, changed into formal attire and stood by Whitaker's side as a member of the wedding party.

Whitaker, undefeated in seven professional fights, had been scheduled to meet Manny Hernandez in an eight-round lightweight match but he had to withdraw after breaking a bone in his left foot last month.

Four 1984 U.S. Olympic boxing medallists — Tyrrell Biggs, Evander Holyfield, Meldrick Taylor and Mark Breland — on Saturday extended their unbeaten professional records, two of them by knockouts.

Biggs, a gold medallist, knocked out Tony Anthony at 2:57 of the first round of their heavyweight bout. Holyfield, also a bronze medallist, scored a technical knockout over Anthony Davis at 1:31 in the fourth round of their cruiserweight match.

The toughest fight of the afternoon belonged to gold medallist Taylor, who endured an eight-round slugfest with Victor Acosta before earning a unanimous decision in the lightweight bout.

Breland, a gold medallist, jabbed his way to a unanimous welterweight decision over Hedgemon "Two Guns" Robertson in the afternoon's final bout.

Yugoslav wins world middleweight title

PESARO, Italy (AP) — Yugoslav Slobodan Kacar has clinched the World IBF middleweight boxing title by defeating American Eddie Gregory on points after 15 bruising rounds.

Gregory, also known as Mustafa Mohammad, took an early edge in the late Saturday night fight with a flurry of well-placed jabs in the first and second rounds.

In the fourth round, he wounded his opponent below the nose with a headbutt — a practice that eventually cost him a warning in the 11th round. But Kacar then came alive, using a skillful left hook to his advantage in the sixth and seventh rounds.

The two fighters were evenly matched during the next few rounds. In the final two, the more aggressive Gregory appeared to dominate a weary Kacar, but the Yugoslav was awarded the victory on points.

An American judge gave Gregory the triumph, 143-141. The two Italian judges gave it to Kacar, 144-141 and 145-143.

"I was ready like never before and after an initial moment of emotion, I realised that I could do it," Kacar said after the fight. "I maintain the verdict was just and not unjust to Gregory, who is an awesome fighter."

Gregory disagreed, saying: "I said that I could beat Kacar and I proved it."

Meanwhile in Bangkok World Boxing Association (WBA) junior-bantamweight champion Khaosai Galaxy of Thailand aims to live up to his reputation as a knockout winner when he defends his crown Monday.

Khaosai, whose 28-1 record includes 24 victories by knockout, faces fifth-ranked Edgar Moneer of Panama in a 15-round clash at Rajadamnern Stadium

where the Thai won the title last year and twice successfully defended it this year.

Khaosai won all three fights by knockout, capturing the crown against the Dominican Republic's Eusebio Espinal and keeping it with wins over South Korean Dong Chun Lee and Rafael Orozco of Venezuela.

Moneer, a southpaw (left-hander) with a 13-1 record including nine wins by knockout, is lean but tall and will have a reach and speed advantage over the champion. He said: "I'm in good shape and will not go back empty handed. I'll take the title with me."

Khaosai is also a southpaw, but his trainer Tong Tavorvivibutr said the champion was 2.72 kg's over the 52.16 kg weight limit and would have to do some shedding.

Becker beats Wilander

MUNICH, West Germany (R) — Boris Becker pulled West Germany level with Sweden in the Davis Cup Tennis Final Sunday with a brilliant victory over Mats Wilander.

Becker's 6-3, 2-6, 6-3, 6-3 win brought the score to 2-2 with the tie now resting on the concluding singles between Sweden's Stefan Edberg and Michael Westphal of

West Germany. Wimbledon Champion Becker showed no trace on the hip injury which he said had hampered him in Saturday's doubles as he out-powered Wilander.

"I think my wins here over Edberg and Wilander were the most important of my career," he said in a television interview on court afterwards.

Miller, January win golf's richest purse

MONTEGO BAY, Jamaica (AP) — Alice Miller sank a 12-foot birdie putt on the second playoff hole Saturday to give her and partner Don January a victory over Lee Elder and Pat Bradley in the \$730,000 Mazda Champions Golf Tournament.

Miller and January picked up the winner's share of \$500,000 — the richest first-place prize in golf — in the two-day tournament.

The teams were composed of golfers from the LPGA and the PGA's seniors tour.

Both January-Miller and Elder-Bradley finished the 36-hole Better-Ball Tournament at 15-under-par 127. Elder-Bradley, who held a two-shot lead

going into the final round, posted a 7-under-par 64, while January-Miller recorded a 9-under 62.

Gay Brewer and Betsy King finished a stroke behind at 128 after finishing with a 63. Orville Moody and Beth Daniel were another shot back at 129.

January-Miller turned the front nine of the 6,407-yard, par-71, triyall golf and beach club course in 5-under 31. January birdied the second hole and eagled the fifth, and Miller added birdies of her own on the third and fourth holes.

January then birdied holes 10, 13 and 16 on the back side, while Miller added a birdie on the 15th to close in 4-under 31.

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Senior school offers a range of courses preparing students for the Adabi examination, GCE 'O' levels, Tawjihi, GCE 'A' levels and the International Baccalaureate.

Full details of the admission procedure, and application forms, are available from the school between 8.30 a.m. and 3 p.m. from Jan. 4-21 and Feb. 4-19.

The closing date for applications is Wednesday, Feb. 19 and interviews and entrance tests will take place on Thursday, Feb. 27.

Garner beats Bergstrom in Junior Tennis Championship

MIAMI BEACH, Florida (AP) — Tenth-seeded Chris Garner of the United States upset Christian Bergstrom of Sweden 6-0, 6-4 Saturday in the quarterfinals of the 18-and-under boys competition at the Capital Bank Orange Bowl Junior Tennis Championships.

Garner lost just 12 points in a near-perfect first set which lasted only 28 minutes.

Garner will play third-seeded Bruno Oresar of Yugoslavia in

one of Sunday's semifinals, while top-seeded Claudio Pistolesi of Italy meets ninth-seeded Argentina's Guillermo Perez Roldan in the other.

Oresar beat eighth-seeded Joao Silva of Portugal 6-3, Yav Pistolesi downed 11th-seeded Al Parker of the United States, 6-3, 6-2 and Perez Roldan downed 15th-seeded Christer Algaard of Sweden 6-2, 6-2.

In the 18-and-under girls quarterfinals, top-seeded Laura Gar-

rone of Italy barely pulled out a 6-3 3-6, 7-6 victory over Shaun Stafford of the United States, the winner of the U.S. Open and French Open junior titles, needed 2 hours and 33 minutes to dispose of her unseeded opponent.

Garne is scheduled to play third-seeded Mary Joe Fernandez of the United States in one semifinal, with fourth-seeded Patricia Tarabini of Argentina and unseeded Elizabeth Galpin of the United States in the other semifinal.

Fernandez won nine of the final 10 games to beat fifth-seeded Mariana Perez Roldan of Argentina 6-4, 6-1. Tarabini slipped past unseeded Caterina Nozzoli of Italy 6-3, 7-6 and Galpin upset 12th-seeded Kerri Reiter of the United States, 6-2, 6-2.

In the 16-and-under finals, unseeded Patrick Wennberg of Sweden was pitted against top-seeded Arnaud Boetsch of France for the boys' title and top-seeded Sybille Noix Chateau against sixth-seeded Alexia Dechaume in an all-French girls' final.

Wennberg gained his spot in the final with a 6-2, 6-4 victory over unseeded David Wheaton of the United States and Boetsch beat fifth-seeded Per Henriksson of Sweden 6-1, 6-1.

Noix Chateau of France won the first 10 games on her way to a 6-0, 6-2 victory over unseeded Rona Daniels of the United States, and Dechaume won the last 10 games of her roller-coaster 6-1, 3-6, 6-0 decision over ninth-seeded Emmanuelle Derty, also of France.

Huge surf closes beaches, postpones surfing contest

HONOLULU (AP) — Monstrous surf of up to 25 feet (7.6 metres) pounded the north shores of Oahu and Kauai Islands Saturday, capsizing a cruise boat and forcing professional surfers to postpone a contest until the waves slackened.

Public beaches were closed and lifeguards warned sightseers to keep their distance from the waves, which forecasters said were generated by a storm far to the north west of the islands.

A few "crazy" surfers braved the giant waves at Waimea Bay, but all other famed surfing spots such as the Banzai Pipeline, Sunset Beach and Makaha were abandoned, said Lifeguard Harada.

On Kauai, a 35-foot (10.6-metre) cruise boat anchored in Hanalei Bay was swamped and capsized early Saturday. The lone crewman aboard the boat was rescued by a helicopter, said Police Lt. Clayton Arinaga.

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TENDER NO. 16/85

This is to inform all concerned that the revised closing date for Aqaba Workshop Extension Project Tender is Jan. 30, 1986. Sealed tenders must be handed over to the Chief Clerk of ARC's office at Ma'an or the Ministry of Transport office at Amman on or before 12:30 p.m. on Jan. 30, 1986.

Mardi Qatamin
Director General

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Tel: 622112
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(Colour)
Performances: 7:20, 9:00, 10:30, 12:00

Cinema Philadelphia
Tel: 634144 - 634149
OPERATION TIGER
(Colour)
Performances: 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 10:15

Cinema RAGHADAN
Tel: 622198
YUDH
(Colour)
Performances: 12:00, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00

Cinema OPERA
Address: behind Alh. offices
Tel: 675573
AMANI UNDER RAINBOW
(Colour)
Performances: 6:30, 8:00, 9:30

S. Arabia expects fair reciprocity from EC

RIYADH — There is a small cloud over trade relations between Europe and Saudi Arabia. Unless carefully watched, it could turn to rain.

For Europe, the issue is minor — the tariffs which the European Community (EC) has imposed on petrochemical imports from the Kingdom. For Saudi Arabia the issue runs much deeper, and has been raised into a point of principle.

The new Saudi chemical plants at the centre of the argument represent \$12 billion of investment. They also represent the culmination of the country's three-year plan, a massive project designed to lessen Saudi dependence on crude oil and develop added-value within the country's borders.

For European chemical producers the new plants are a direct threat. In particular, Saudi access to feedstock raw materials much below the European price has caused fears of dumping on a European market already burdened with severe overcapacity.

For Saudi Arabia, now looking ahead to its fourth plan and the formation of further export-oriented industries downstream, free access to Europe is seen as a test case for future development.

European companies are genuinely puzzled by the Saudi reaction. The tariff mechanism was in place long before Saudi chemical production was even thought of. It is now being applied in the normal way. Why should Saudi Arabia be treated differently?

"Because we treat others dif-

ferently," says Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al-Zamil, Saudi minister of industry. "Countries like Brazil, Korea or Taiwan are liable to ban products from Europe, or impose quotas, or put on tariffs of 60 per cent. We let 55 per cent of European products into Saudi Arabia duty-free, including \$200 million (\$296 million) worth of the same petrochemicals as we produce here. We are entitled to ask you for the same treatment, not a tariff of 14 per cent."

Leaning on the West

The issue is broadened by Prince Abdullah Ibn Faisal Ibn Turki, acting head of the royal commission, for Jubail and Yanbu, the body responsible for the infrastructure of the industrial cities.

"A lot of people here saw the West as economic partners," he says. "When they wanted us to produce 11 million barrels of crude a day, it was a sacrifice, but it was felt that the West would remember that we could lean on the West when times were bad. But short-term political expediency seems more important than long-term friendly relationship."

Protection against Saudi products is not confined to Europe. U.S. tariffs are at a level equivalent to the EC's and there are moves in Congress (as yet inconclusive) to raise them further. Nevertheless, it is Europe which is the main focus of Saudi pressure. This is partly because Europe's closeness as a market makes it

more important to the new plants' commercial success. There is also a subjective reason: In getting the whole vast project off the ground, Saudi Arabia owes a considerable debt of gratitude to the U.S., and little to Europe.

This has to do with the way the project was planned. The new plants are split among different companies, under the umbrella of the Saudi Arabian Basic Industries Corporation (SABIC). Almost all the companies are joint ventures, shared on a 50/50 basis with a partner from the developed world.

Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Zamil explains the logic. "For a project on this scale we needed at least five inputs to achieve results, and we lacked two. We had the finance, we had the raw materials, and we could build the infrastructure. What we lacked was technical know-how and marketing expertise, and the only way to get them was to invite partners in."

From 1979 on, SABIC went looking for those partners. A number of U.S. companies took up the offer, as did several Japanese consortia. European companies refused.

Training in U.S.

"They laughed at us," says Prince Abdullah. "They didn't believe we could build the plants, let alone make a success of them."

For Europe, the successful completion of the plants below budget and ahead of schedule was a correspondingly rude shock. That success in turn rested largely on help from the U.S. and to a lesser extent from Japan. The young Saudis who are now taking charge of the new plants were mostly educated at American universities and then had several years of on-the-job training from their joint-venture partners.

Mr. Max Webb, the American head of the National Methanol Company (50 per cent owned by SABIC, the rest split equally between Celanese Corporation and Texas Eastern of the U.S.), says: "We gave three years of one-on-one training in the U.S. to 61 Saudi operatives."

That came to slightly over \$150,000 per head. It was a cost which we wouldn't have incurred in a U.S. operation, where we can hire qualified people off the street."

Some of the training was remarkably specific. This year's start-up of the polyethylene plant run by another SABIC company, Kema (50 per cent owned by the U.S. oil company Exxon), was particularly trouble-free. Saudi trainees had been given hands-on experience in the start-up of an identical Exxon polyethylene plant at Mount Belvedere in Texas two years before.

The Saudi attitude is also coloured by the question of European overcapacity — anything up to 20 per cent in the chemicals and plastics which SABIC now produces. "Europe's disbelief in our plans," says one official, "misled companies who should have closed down outdated plant long before."

The Saudis point to the contrast with other countries. The Saudi

Methanol Company is a joint venture with a Japanese consortium. In 1979, Japan had methanol capacity of almost one million tonnes per year. That has been cut back to 200,000 tonnes, with around 300,000 tonnes being supplied to Japan from Saudi Arabia.

"The Japanese have done a real fine job," says Mr. Bill Carpenter, head of the ethylene producer Sadaf (50 per cent owned by Shell U.S.). "Rather than importing raw materials, they prefer to bring the stuff in with a lot of the energy content already in there. But the Europeans seem to want to stick with what they have."

But North Sea oil production makes the European position somewhat different from the Japanese. In addition the unexpected weakness of the oil price has left the U.S. and Japanese partners expressing disappointment with the financial return on their investment.

At the time when SABIC was searching for partners — in the period 1979-81 — the world was suffering from the second oil shock, and the price of crude was expected to go through the ceiling. Part of the deal offered by SABIC to prospective partners was "incentive crude" — a guaranteed supply of oil at a price which was, at least initially, fixed.

Instead, the oil price has fallen sharply. Mr. Chuchi Raito, the Japanese head of Saudi Methanol, says "it has turned out to be a disincentive. Our Japanese consortium takes two million barrels of 'incentive crude' a year, so if the spot price drops below the fixed price by \$3, we carry a loss of \$6 million. The business is profitable and paying dividends, but Mitsubishi (the consortium leader) is disappointed with the results to date."

Although Europe's chemical companies kept clear of that problem, they are correspondingly without control over new Saudi output. At present, 80 per cent of it is marketed not by SABIC but by the joint-venture partners — old and experienced competitors such as Exxon, Mobil and Celanese.

Question of price

The question which exercises the minds of Europe's producers is price. The Saudi plants have an unbeatable edge on raw material costs: The ethane gas used as the chief feedstock is made available to SABIC for 50¢ per mmbtu — around a quarter of the price paid in developed countries.

SABIC insists that it will market its products responsibly, and observe prevailing prices. The Europeans do not believe a word of it, even though the evidence so far seems to be on SABIC's side. This might be seen as evidence of European overcapacity, were it not for the cost difference in the cost structures of the Saudi and European industries.

Mr. Ibrahim Salamah, SABIC's managing director, says "though our total costs compared with European manufacturers are not very different, Europe's variable costs — fuels and feedstock — are as high as 70 per cent of the total. With us, it's the other way round. Our fixed costs — plant, equi-

ment, infrastructure — make up around 70 per cent, with variable costs only 30 per cent."

It follows that for Europe the highest return on investment depends above all on getting the highest price for the product, even at the expense of some under-utilisation of plant capacity. For the Saudis the opposite is the case: As Mr. Ibrahim Salamah puts it, "we are determined to run at full capacity whatever the market."

Initial negotiations on the whole tariff issue took place in Luxembourg in November between the EC and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Although the outcome remains uncertain, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Al Zamil professes optimism.

"The EC is still putting tariffs on our methanol, and lately on our polyethylene," he says. "They tell us that tariffs have to stay until the start of next year, but we are hopeful that they will remove them in January. They certainly should if they listen to other sectors of European industry. Industrial sectors like plastics processing, which really employ people, have been affected for the benefit of chemical producers which are low employers."

In the forefront of the industry minister's mind is the next stage of industrialisation. "The joint-venture approach remains essential. We have made clear to our European colleagues that Saudi Arabia does not want to continue just as an importer of European products — a good proportion should be manufactured in GCC countries. It's really the same as Europe saying to Japan 'you can't go on damaging our industry by merely importing'."

The comparison with Japan is revealing, and comes up again in Sheikh Al Zamil's plea for equal treatment over tariffs. "That is how matters are done between industrialised countries such as Japan and the U.S."

"If any advantage has come from the difference of opinion over petrochemicals," Sheikh Al Zamil says, "it has been in bringing to the fore the lack of communication in the past between two very important trading partners. There had been intensive talks in the past with Japan and the U.S., but in the case of Europe the relationship had apparently been taken for granted."

Previous suggestions of tariff retaliation by Saudi Arabia are now played down. "We don't like the tit-for-tat approach," Sheikh Al Zamil says. "The principle is that we want fair treatment, and there are many ways of making that position felt. But certainly the treatment of Saudi products creates a negative image here, and will have a continuous impact on trade relations."

There is a further conciliatory note from Mr. Ibrahim Salamah of SABIC. "The European chemical industry is now in the process of rationalisation. That isn't a question of shrinking, just moving to more specialised products. If European companies want a supply of commodity chemicals in future, they shouldn't wait for the need to arise. This is a good time to build a relationship."

Financial Times news feature.

U.S. heads for new row with major food exporters

WASHINGTON (R) — Farm legislation to be signed into law by President Reagan Monday will push the United States towards confrontation with other food exporters, including the European Community (EC), Australia and Canada.

The bill contains provisions that would increase exports of U.S. grain and dairy products into already saturated world markets and limit U.S. imports of sugar from developing countries whose economies depend crucially on its sale.

They have been inserted into it at the insistence of legislators from farm states weary of waiting for U.S. agricultural exports to recover from a five-year slump.

The congressional dismissed administration warnings of retaliation by trading partners if some of the aggressive measures are implemented, insisting on them as the price for agreeing to provisions in the bill which hold income subsidies to farmers at current levels for two years.

"I think we are going to be very competitive (in world markets) with this bill," said Agriculture Secretary John Block.

One provision will force the United States Department of Agriculture to use all of the \$2 billion allocated in a programme under

which commodity traders who export grain receive a certain amount free from government-held stocks.

The administration earlier this year decided that the subsidies be used against EC markets in North Africa and the Middle East.

So far sales worth \$50 million have been made under the scheme, with another \$400 million in proposed deals under consideration.

The new provision will force the Agriculture Department to broaden the programme to markets held by countries such as Australia, which does not subsidise its wheat exports.

"We will have to be more aggressive in running a programme of that size," said Mr. Robert Thompson, an assistant secretary of agriculture.

Another requirement in the bill is that at least 150,000 tons of the burgeoning U.S. surplus of dairy products be sold on world markets each year.

In the past, U.S. sales of butter,

butter oil and non-fat dried milk have averaged less than 100,000 tons annually.

Perhaps the most far-reaching of the protectionist measures in the farm bill — inserted at the behest of the powerful domestic sugarcane and beet growers — directs the administration to reduce drastically U.S. sugar imports from developing countries.

The controversial directive, strongly opposed by secretary of state, Mr. George Shultz, sets a high domestic price for sugar, then forces the U.S. government to defend that price by limiting imports.

Administration officials said they would probably stretch out 1986 sugar import quotas for an additional three months or slash the 1.7 million ton quotas outright to comply with the provision.

Twenty-one Latin American and Caribbean countries, plus major sugar producers such as the Philippines and Australia, would be affected by the action.

In addition, a last minute amendment proposed by conservative Republican Jesse Helms of North Carolina effectively bars Canadian sugar imports.

It says the United States must not buy sugar from countries which themselves import the commodity from Cuba.

KPC profits fall by 25 per cent

KUWAIT (AP) — The Kuwait Petroleum Corporation (KPC), ranking 7th among the world's oil giants, realised net profits of 209 million Kuwaiti dinars (\$731 million) in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1985 according to a report submitted to parliament Sunday.

The figure represents a 25 per cent drop in net profits below the previous year, when KPC's profits stood at 280 million dinars (\$980 million).

It was the second year in a row the KPC registers a retreat in profits, attributed mainly to slack world demand for oil, the protracted war between Iran and Iraq and world economic recession.

The report, which was divulged by parliament deputies, put the

KPC's total revenues in the year ending June 30, 1985 at 3,772 million dinars (\$13.2 billion), which meant a drop of 213 million dinars (\$746 million) from fiscal 1983-84.

The corporation realised 3,212 million dinars (\$11.2 billion) in revenues from exports of crude oil and oil derivatives.

Income from crude oil sales was put at 1,693 million dinars (\$5.9 billion), which represents about 50 per cent of the value of the total sales, according to the report.

The KPC noted that crude oil exports fell by 39,000 barrels a day below last year's rates, showing that Kuwait was becoming increasingly dependent on the export of oil products, and less

exposed to the fluctuations of crude oil market demand.

The KPC is umbrella for all companies involved in the Kuwait oil industry, including petrochemicals and the oil tanker shipping. The fully state-owned corporation is chaired by Oil Minister Ali Khalifa Al Sabah.

Kuwait's income from natural gas and liquefied petroleum gas sales were put at 186 million dinars (\$651 million).

The report revealed that the KPC incurred losses amounting to 72 million dinars (\$252 million), its share in the losses borne by subsidiaries and associate companies working in the U.S., the U.K., the Far East and elsewhere in the world.

British food company withdraws milk products from world markets

LONDON (R) — A British food company has told distributors in more than 40 countries to withdraw its milk products from sale after an outbreak of food poisoning among babies.

A spokesman for Farley Health Products, a leading British producer of baby milk foods, said the directive applied to three baby products, Oster Feed, Oster Milk Complete Formula and Oster Milk Two, as well as Complan, a milk-based nutritional supplement used by adults.

The action followed the discovery by a public health laboratory in London that 41 babies fed with Oster products had suffered diarrhoea as a result of salmonella poisoning.

The British health ministry earlier advised parents to stop using the Farley baby products and the firm told domestic distributors to remove supplies from supermarket and pharmacy shelves.

A Farley spokesman said the biggest foreign markets for its baby products were Iraq, Trinidad and the Irish Republic. The baby milk formulas and Complan were on sale in more than 40 countries.

"We have contacted all distributors with instructions to withdraw the products immediately. Where possible, we have contacted the ministry of health in the countries concerned as well," the spokesman said.

The company has meanwhile suspended all production at its plant at Kendal in northwestern England although health checks at the site and among its 320 staff had so far proved negative.

The salmonella cases reported were mostly among babies under one year old. Complan, a supplement used by elderly and convalescent people and which is not under suspicion, is produced at the same factory.

"The spokesman said that, while no direct connection between Farley products and the food poisoning had been traced, there was a statistical connection among those affected by the salmonella outbreak."

YOUR DAILY Horoscope

from the Carroll Righter Institute

FORECAST FOR MONDAY, DEC. 23, 1985

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Make use of any spare moments, and get last-minute shopping attended to. Then take a look at your financial condition and find out what you are able to do to best utilize your funds.

ARIES (Mar. 21 to Apr. 19) Plan how to best budget your money for gifts. Plot out regular payments for something that is valuable.

TAURUS (Apr. 20 to May 20) Some practical matter concerning yourself is wise to handle in the morning. Be charming with your friends.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 21) Plan early which private matters need to be handled. Schedule your activities for the whole work week.

MOON CHILDREN (June 22 to Jul. 21) Try to spend as much time as you can with good friends and consider your personal wishes. You gain your aims easily.

LEO (Jul. 22 to Aug. 21) A good day to handle shopping and credit affairs and handle civic matters. Gain support from bigwigs.

VIRGO (Aug. 22 to Sept. 22) Be more concerned with the spirit of the holidays and come to a better understanding with others. Discuss the future wisely.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You had better ask your mate what you expect for the holidays and vice versa. Make sure your car is in fine condition.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) Be with a determined partner otherwise you could make an error. A public situation could last for quite a long time.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) There is so much to do and you need to schedule your time wisely to get the best results.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 20) You have fine creative ideas so put them in operation quickly, and get good results. Be happy with your mate.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 21 to Feb. 19) Being at home today and entertaining tonight is wise. Talk over holiday plans with your family.

PISCES (Feb. 20 to Mar. 20) Gad about here and there and get much accomplished. The evening is fine for attending social affairs.

IF YOUR CHILD IS BORN TODAY ... he or she will have a fine mind and a good memory and should study financial interests and become very successful. One who will be a definite intellectual. There will be much determination here and few can change the mind. Give good spiritual training.

THE Daily Crossword by William Canine

- ACROSS
- 1 Constellation's second star
 - 5 Stimulates
 - 10 Citizen of Tahiti
 - 12 Lyrer
 - 14 Unstable
 - 16 Nova Scotia capital
 - 17 Drunkard
 - 18 Unproductive
 - 20 D.C. agy.
 - 21 Symbol of witch
 - 23 Poplar
 - 24 Small dog for short
 - 25 Courts
 - 27 Addition
 - 28 Sheep shelters
 - 29 Sleeveless garment
 - 31 Certain guess
 - 32 China Sea
 - 34 Catch sight of
 - 37 Buttonwood
 - 41 Contemporary of R.W. Emerson
 - 42 Cone-bearing
 - 43 Keep the — (side not reveal)
 - 44 Shark
 - 45 Unstable
 - 47 Picnic
 - 48 Quantity: abbr.
 - 49 "Cavalier" star
 - 51 Brooklyn inst.
 - 52 Concave
 - 54 Viscosity
 - 56 Bold
 - 57 Downcast
 - 58 Persian coins
 - 59 Small strongly

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Yesterday's Puzzle Solved:

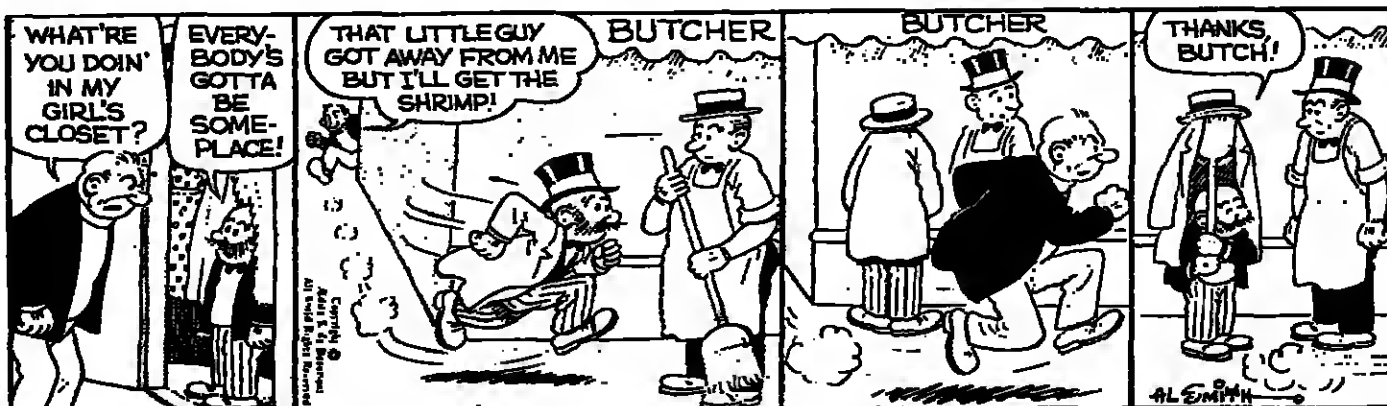
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 - 49 "Cavalier" star
 - 51 Brooklyn inst.
 - 52 Concave
 - 54 Viscosity
 - 56 Bold
 - 57 Downcast
 - 58 Persian coins
 - 59 Small strongly

- DOWN
- 1 March bird
 - 2 Paleozoic a.g.
 - 3 Mistle tree
 - 4 Look or glimpse
 - 5 Grampus
 - 6 Predicament
 - 7 Silkworm
 - 8 Down material
 - 9 Let up
 - 10 Ocean hazard
 - 11 Air-condition
 - 12 Superfluity
 - 13 Musical acronym
 - 14 Conductor
 - 15 Girdle
 - 16 Freedom to
 - 17 Debeaten
 - 18 Controversy
 - 19 Full of
 - 20 Enthusiasm
 - 21 Allot stuff
 - 22 Any: dial.
 - 23 Community: abbr.
 - 24 Ancient tomb
 - 25 Flea
 - 26 Security
 - 27 Talk: colloquially
 - 28 Harem occupant
 - 29 Polypodium
 - 30 Batman's
 - 31 Adjective
 - 32 Auxiliary verb
 - 33 Dub
 - 34 Premier
 - 35 Energy org.
 - 36 My word!
 - 37 Supreme Court
 - 38 Justice once
 - 39 Auxiliary verb
 - 40 Dub
 - 41 Energy org.
 - 42 My word!

Peanuts



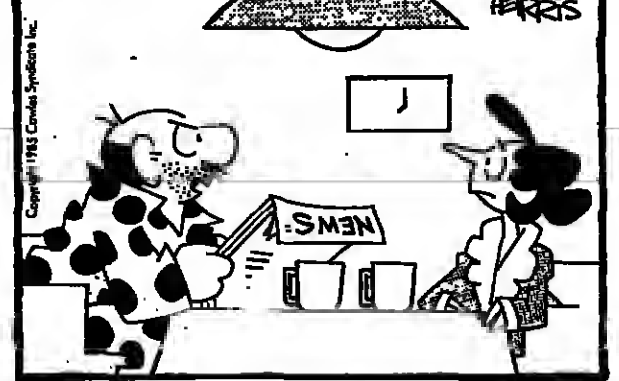
Mutt 'n' Jeff



Andy Capp



THE BETTER HALF. By Harris



JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

- LEWJE
CRANF
THROBE
DEFUAL

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: IT

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: CRAWL HANDY JUNGLE RATION

Answer: Where you might go in order to make yourself more attractive — OUT OF YOUR "WEIGH"

Winnie Mandela arrested

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — Black activist Winnie Mandela was arrested Sunday by South African police, officials said.

Mrs. Mandela had defiantly returned during the night to her home in the township of Soweto after having been forcibly removed Saturday by police, according to her lawyer.

Mrs. Mandela, the wife of jailed nationalist leader Nelson Mandela, was detained for violating an order banning her from Soweto, a police spokesman said.

Capt. Henry Beck of South African Police Headquarters told Reuters Mrs. Mandela was arrested under security legislation for contravening a restriction order. She was Saturday dragged by security policemen from her home in Soweto, the huge black township near Johannesburg.

The white-led government had earlier relaxed eight-year-old banishment orders on Mrs. Mandela and told her that Soweto was out of bounds to her.

She spent the early part of Saturday night with friends at the Indian township of Laudium near the capital, Pretoria.

Law and Order Minister Louis Le Grange earlier announced that Mrs. Mandela, 51, need no longer return to internal exile at the remote town of Brandfort, where she was confined by the minority government in 1977 for opposing white domination.

She had openly defied the authorities by staying in Soweto since her Brandfort home, 350 kilometres south of Johannesburg, was damaged by arsonists in August.

Saturday's incident was the latest chapter in Mrs. Mandela's battle against the regime which imprisoned her husband for life in 1964 for sabotage and plotting revolution.

Police, apparently fearing a backlash in Soweto, where Winnie Mandela is revered, sent dozens of policemen with riot squads and armoured personnel carriers to encircle her home before she was ousted.

Her new banishment rules eased the tight restrictions placed on her in 1977. She may now stay anywhere in the country except the Johannesburg district, which includes Soweto.

She may also attend social gatherings after years of bans, which she often defied, on meetings with more than one person at a time.

But the continued ban on visiting her, in addition to a prohibition on attending political gatherings and staying in Soweto, will still make it hard to maintain contact with the black majority.

Her years of fighting for racial equality in South Africa have attracted worldwide attention.

Last month she fuelled speculation on the possible release of her husband by visiting him frequently in Cape Town. The government has since dashed expectations of an early release.

Winnie Mandela has become more radical in recent years. Two weeks ago she again ignored her banning order to tell 50,000 mourners at the funeral of an unrest victim near Pretoria: "The blood of our heroes will be avenged."

She has tackled white supremacist policies head on. When she first arrived in Brandfort, a conservative town of Dutch-descended Afrikaners, she would deliberately spend hours in the supermarket while the locals waited outside rather than do their shopping with a black person present.

Summing up her views on the future of South Africa, she told Reuters a year ago: "The Afrikaner will never negotiate with blacks because of his fear of being swamped by another race."

Internal strife continued across the country Saturday and police said a 15-year-old black girl was whipped to death by a crowd of blacks at Queenstown, eastern Cape province.

Police did not say whether they had established a motive for the murder, which added another victim to the list of over 1,000 people

killed in racial violence since February last year.

In the Indian Ocean port of Durban, five people were wounded under a bomb was thrown under a mini-bus in the centre of the whites-only city. No arrests were made.

Meanwhile in Rome more than 10,000 people from all over Italy took to the streets of downtown Rome on Saturday in a Christmas protest against apartheid in South Africa.

The majority of demonstrators marched peacefully under sunny skies, but a group of leftists threw eggs and shouted, refusing to quiet down when former President Sandro Pertini spoke out against South Africa's racial policies at a concluding rally.

Despite the disturbance, Mr. Pertini criticised Western countries for their failure to act with firmness against apartheid.

"South African racism... forces blacks to work in inhuman conditions in the mines," said Mr. Pertini. "How can South Africans call themselves Christians when they still haven't learned to love blacks as their brothers?"

Andrew Vason, J. of the anti-apartheid African National Congress also spoke at the rally about the sacrifices made by South African blacks in their struggle with the Pretoria government for equality.

Student to head Assam government

GAUHAATI, India (AP) — A law student was elected Sunday as leader of the new state government in Assam, headed by a regional party that routed Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi's Congress I Party in special elections.

Pratulla Kumar Mahanta, likely to be sworn in as chief minister on Monday or Tuesday, will be the first student head of a state government in India.

Mr. Mahanta 32, was unanimously chosen to head the new administration at a meeting of the Asom Gana Parishad (Assam People's Council). The 63 newly-elected state deputies met at a government guest house in Gauhati, Assam's main city.

The bearded Mahanta, a masters of law student at Gauhati University, spearheaded a crippling, six-year protest demanding the expulsion of more than 1 million Bengali-speaking immigrants from neighbouring Bangladesh. The native Assamese complain the refugee influx threatens to swamp the state culturally and economically.

The mid-term elections in Assam followed a peace accord between Mr. Gandhi and anti-immigration agitators led by Mahanta, formerly president of the All-

Assam Students Union.

The settlement calls for a 10-year disenfranchisement of illegal settlers who entered Assam between 1966-71, and expulsion of those who came after the 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence.

Nearly all the senior leaders of Parishad are young men, many of them still students in the oil-rich state of 22 million people in north eastern India.

Mr. Mahanta earlier told the Associated Press in an interview that expulsion of aliens would be a top priority of the new government.

"All foreigners in Assam will be sent back to their country of origin," he said.

But he declined to say how the settlers could be deported in face of Bangladesh's stated refusal to accept them.

The mid-term elections ended nearly three years of rule in Assam by the Congress Party, which was installed in power following the violence-marred state elections in 1983.

The 1983 poll was boycotted by most of the native Assamese Hindus. According to government count, more than 3,600 people were slain in election-related violence involving natives, Bengali settlers and tribespeople.

Anit-immigrant agitators refused to accept as legitimate the Congress state government, and the special elections were called in response to their demand.

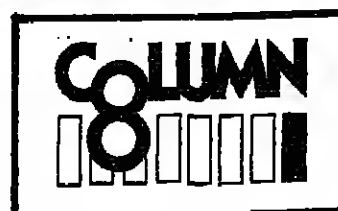
The poll was part of a recent settlement between Mr. Gandhi and agitators led by Mr. Mahanta.

The settlement also says all illegal settlers who sneaked across the border into Assam will lose the vote for 10 years, while those who came after the 1971 Bangladesh War of Independence will be deported.

According to the final returns, the Parishad won 63 of the 125 state assembly races and seven of the 14 national parliamentary constituencies. It also has the support in the new legislature of three independents elected with its backing.

Congress, which won 90 of the 108 assembly races in 1983, triumphed in only 25 districts. It also won four parliamentary seats.

It would be the first time in nearly six years that Assam will be represented in the national parliament. Agitators blocked the holding of elections for those seats in January 1981 and December 1984.



Sudan reports death of first AIDS victim

KHARTOUM (R) — The first Sudanese AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) victim has died in a Khartoum hospital, the daily As Safaha newspaper reported Sunday. It said the 43-year-old man, whom it did not identify, contracted the condition in Denmark, where he lived for 20 years before returning to Sudan two months ago. The paper quoted medical sources as saying the case was the only one known in Sudan.

Soviet paper attacks Sylvester Stallone

MOSCOW (R) — Sylvester Stallone, the muscle-bound star of the Rocky and Rambo films, has come under fire from a Soviet newspaper, Sovetskaya Kultura (Soviet Culture), said Stallone, made up for a lack of eloquence on the screen by his hatred for Communism and the Soviet Union. In a report from Washington, the daily centred its attack on Stallone's major success, Rocky IV, in which the heavyweight hero of the first three Rocky films takes on a villainous Soviet boxer. "Don't worry," it soothed the U.S. cinema audience, "although the one with the hammer and sickle is a head taller, your favourite will not let you down — he sweats rivers and loses a bucket of blood, but he stays on his feet." Quoting the publicity posters for the film, it said they were like an axe-handle beating on the head with the message "get ready, the third world war is coming."

3 policemen flogged for kidnap, rape

KARACHI, Pakistan (AP) — Three policemen sentenced for the kidnapping, rape and sale of two Bangladesh women were publicly flogged. Each of the convicts were whipped 15 times in presence of a crowd in the city of Hyderabad, 100 kilometres north east of Karachi, eyewitnesses said. The local court had convicted the three and a civilian for raping and attempting to sell the Bangladesh women. The women and their husbands were arrested on charges of entering Pakistan without legal travel documents in July. The police officers abducted the women and attempted to sell them as prostitutes.

Japan's population tops 120 million

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's population has topped 120 million for the first time with 120,047,061 people living in the archipelago, according to preliminary results of the government's 1985 census conducted in October. The preliminary results, published in Japanese newspapers Sunday, show an increase of about 3,980,000 people over the last such population poll taken in 1980. Tokyo's population was 11,828,262, or about 210,000 more than the last census. Japan's second-largest city of Osaka registered 8,668,114 residents. The population figures are certain to fuel calls for revision of the distribution of seats in the House of Representatives in the Japanese Diet (parliament).

Christmas lottery pays prizes up to \$400 million

MADRID, Spain (AP) — Lottery-mad Spaniards listened attentively as the numbers were drawn for the world's richest lottery, which handed out tax-exempt prizes totalling 63 billion pesetas (\$400 million). First reports indicated that much of the first prize, popularly known as El Gordo (the fat one), would be widely spread among residents of a working-class neighbourhood of Talavera De La Reina, a town 110 kilometres south west of Madrid. El Gordo pays 250 million pesetas (\$1.6 million) to each of the 55 series of the winning number, or 12.5 billion pesetas (\$80.6 million) altogether. Each peseta invested on the winning number gets 10,000 pesetas (\$64). This year's El Gordo was 63369. Another group of winners in the traditional Christmas lottery was concentrated in the Madrid suburb of Argueles, where residents, many of them employees of a natural gas distribution company, won a chunk of El Gordo. The manager of the firm, Butano S.A., said he decided to take impromptu vacations "to enjoy their good luck as it should be enjoyed."

Ortega challenges Reagan to polygraph test

MANAGUA, Nicaragua (AP) — President Daniel Ortega has challenged U.S. President Ronald Reagan to submit to a polygraph test "to show who is the liar" in the battle of accusations between the United States and Nicaragua.

Mr. Ortega, addressing the closing session of the Nicaraguan legislature Saturday, referred to Mr. Reagan's Nov. 1 order requiring lie detector tests sometime next year for federal employees and contractors with access to secrets.

"If we were to have applied that method here, they'd be calling us totalitarian," Mr. Ortega said.

Nicaragua's leftist Sandinista government and the Reagan administration have accused each other several times in recent weeks of promoting violence in Central America and beyond.

Sandinista officials have accused the United States of supplying anti-Sandinista rebels, known as Contras, with surface-to-air rockets. A Soviet-made Mi-8 helicopter was shot down with such a rocket on Dec. 2 inside

Nicaragua after a firefight with Contras operating over the border in adjacent Honduras.

The Reagan administration has denied supplying the Contras with lethal weapons.

For its part, the Reagan administration has accused Nicaragua of training Colombian rebels fighting the government in that South American country. A rebel group seized Colombia's Palace of Justice on Nov. 6 and 95 people were killed when the Colombian army retook the building. Nicaragua denies the charge.

Last week, U.S. officials said Mr. Reagan's new National Security Adviser, John Poindexter, was told by officials of five friendly Central American countries that they believe Nicaragua poses an ever growing threat to their security.

Mr. Ortega repeated Sandinista charges that the United States has escalated its "war of aggression" against Nicaragua.

"We are disposed to submit to a lie detector," Mr. Ortega said,

U.S. suspect admits spying for Soviets

adding he hoped Mr. Reagan would do the same "so that we can know who is the liar, to see who is lying when he accuses the other party."

"But President Reagan is very cautious, since, as the biggest liar in the world, he has exempted himself from submitting to the lie detector," Mr. Ortega said.

Meanwhile, Cardinal Miguel Obando Y Bravo, leader of the Roman Catholic Church in Nicaragua, called on the faithful Saturday "to never lose hope for a Nicaragua in peace."

In a Christmas message broadcast on the church radio, Obando Y Bravo urged Nicaraguans to remain faithful "in the face of a war among compatriots."

Obando Y Bravo, an outspoken critic of the Sandinista government, invited Catholics to a national eucharistic congress on Jan. 1 where topics are to include "putting emphasis on popular religion."

Tamil rebel leader killed in Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (R) — A local leader of a guerrilla group was killed and 210 people were arrested Saturday in separate security operations in Sri Lanka, a Defence Ministry spokesman said Sunday.

He said troops swooped on a hideout belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) guerrilla group in Jaffna in the north. The rebels fled after their leader was killed and another was wounded.

The LTTE, strongest of the separatist groups fighting for a Tamil state in northern and eastern areas, was believed responsible for attacking six security convoys on routine administrative work in the past four days, he said.

Troops also arrested 210 people in Batticaloa in the east of the country, 18 of whom were identified as members of four rebel groups, the spokesman added.

Two illegal television transmitters capable of sending within a radius of 1.5 kilometres were found by security forces at Mullaitivu in the north. These were being used to transmit guerrilla-sponsored films, he said.

The spokesman denied a report by the National News Agency Lankapuwath Saturday that seven pilgrims, abducted by guerrillas 12 days ago, were feared dead.

"Our information is that the pilgrims, seized while returning from a Roman Catholic shrine in north western Mannar, were alive," he said.

He said children and other relatives of the pilgrims were scheduled to appear on television to appeal to the kidnappers for their release.

On Friday, seven guerrillas were killed and a soldier was wounded in a clash at Arinjai in the north of the island, security sources said.

President Junius Jayewardene repeated calls Saturday for international cooperation against terrorism.

Speaking at the annual meeting of the ruling United National Party in Colombo, Mr. Jayewardene urged Sri Lankans to be patient and understanding until guerrilla activity was eradicated.

"We can achieve success, but it must be through patience. We cannot kill innocent Tamils. If terrorism succeeds, democracy will be destroyed," he was quoted as saying by the newspaper Weekend.

U.S. suspect admits spying for Soviets

WASHINGTON (AP) — Randy Miles Jeffries, an employee of a stenographic firm, has admitted that he spied for the Soviet Union, U.S. authorities have said. He was the 11th person arrested on federal spying charges this year.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) said Saturday that Jeffries told them he had passed secret documents to Soviet agents. His employer, ACME Reporting Co., did stenographic work for the federal government.

Jeffries, 26, was being held without bond and will be arraigned Monday in the U.S. district court on federal charges of gathering or delivering defence information. He was arrested Friday night at a hotel in downtown Washington.

According to the FBI complaint, Jeffries met in the hotel with an FBI agent posing as a Soviet agent. The complaint said Jeffries acknowledged that he had met with Soviet agents on two previous occasions and had provided them with portions of two documents, one of which was described as "top secret."

Jeffries worked in ACME's Distribution Department. The firm did stenographic work for the federal government, including secret sessions of the House of Representatives during which classified material was discussed.

In the complaint, read at a District of Columbia superior court hearing, the government said Jeffries told the undercover FBI agent that he had given the Soviets 60 pages of documents, and had requested \$5,000 for delivering three other documents.

FBI Director William Webster said in a statement Friday that Jeffries had tried to deliver defence information to the Soviet military office Dec. 14, in violation of federal espionage statutes. The address the FBI gave for the military office was on Belmont Road, the location of a military and naval office of the Soviet embassy.

Mr. Webster said the arrest was authorised by Justice Department attorneys and the U.S. attorney in Washington "based on facts developed during an investigation conducted by the Washington field office of the FBI."

Noting the arrest was the 11th for spying this year, Mr. Webster said, "We continue to have tremendous success with the interdiction of persons attempting to deliver our secrets to the hostile intelligence services."

Mummified bodies found in Colombian disaster town

ARMERO, Colombia (R) — Thousands of mummified bodies have been uncovered in the hardened mud sinking over the ruins of Armero, devastated by a volcanic eruption five weeks ago.

Five bodies lay trapped inside a car, evidently stopped in their desperate attempt to escape from the advancing wall of mud. Nearby, a motorcyclist was engulfed by the avalanche. Both rider and machine have been converted into statues of clay.

Since the Nov. 13 eruption of the Nevado Del Ruiz volcano which buried 23,000 people under an avalanche, the blanket of mud has steadily sunk and thousands of bodies have emerged.

Today, it is possible to walk across part of the crust of volcanic ash, rocks and dried mud that expands over more than 3,000 hectares (7,000 acres).

Survivors were allowed this weekend to return to what is left of their once picturesque town as military authorities lifted a strict control imposed for fear of epidemics.

"I have just found my family. They did not die engulfed by the avalanche, they died from hunger and thirst," said an old woman crying beside her miraculously intact house.

Inside lay five badly decomposed bodies without any trace of mud on them.

Zia calls parliament into session on Tuesday

ISLAMABAD (R) — President Mohammad Zia Ul Haq Sunday called Pakistan's National Assembly and Senate into joint session on Tuesday, fuelling speculation that he might announce an end to eight and a half years of martial law then.

A government statement did not give any reason for the unusual session, which is expected to debate foreign policy but could also serve as the platform for the long-awaited proclamation.

Gen. Zia has promised to end army rule by Dec. 31 but has not yet said when he will lift martial law and formally hand over power to the civilian parliament elected in partly-controlled polls last February.

Speculation had centred on Wednesday, anniversary of the birth of Pakistan's founder, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, but dates up to Saturday had been mentioned in the confusion of rumours which often precede Gen. Zia's important speeches.

Police in Lahore detained at least 20 leaders of banned political parties Saturday night to prevent them holding a large rally planned as a show of opposition strength on Wednesday, an opposition spokesman in hiding said.

Squads of police arrested the politicians at their homes under martial law regulations and spokesman Salman Taseer, speaking from a hideout after police surrounded his house while he was away, said dozens of party workers were probably also detained.

Party leaders still free have gone underground to prepare the rally, which they have been publishing through leaflets, posters and the local press, Mr. Taseer said.

Government officials said they still did not know how Gen. Zia would announce the end of martial law. Some said he might simply inform parliament shortly before entering to give his speech.

True to the form which has kept him firmly in charge of Pakistan since coming to power in a coup in July 1977, Gen. Zia has also not divulged what forms of political activity will be permitted after army rule ends.

He has also not made clear whether he will quit his power base, the army, to serve until 1990 as a civilian president.

The parliament — a 237-seat National Assembly and 83-seat Senate — has already pardoned Gen. Zia's coup, ratified amendments strengthening the president's powers, and approved strict limits on the revival of political parties, which were banned in 1979.

Gen. Zia still has the right to keep constitutional articles on basic freedoms suspended indefinitely and political observers will be waiting to see if he revives the whole constitution.

Opposition politicians have focused on this to argue that the new system will be martial law in civilian guise.

Over 1,500 homeless as Italian oil depot blazes

NAPLES, Italy (AP) — Authorities were seeking emergency housing for more than 1,500 people left temporarily homeless by an explosion at a petroleum storage depot that killed four people and injured more than 160.

Firefighters continued their battle round-the-clock to contain the flames that engulfed at least two dozen huge tanks holding gasoline and oil that swept through the facility following the pre-dawn blast.

A spokesman from the Naples city government, who spoke on the condition he not be identified, said that the fire was expected to feed on the flammable liquid for at least another 24 hours.

The more than 700 firefighters called in from all over southern Italy have been able to contain it, however, the spokesman said, and it is not expected to spread to the few non-involved tanks or outside the compound.

The ANSA news agency identified two of the victims as Maria Rocco, 84, and her 50-year-old daughter Flora Rocco, whom Civil Defence Ministry authorities said died when the explosion caused their house to collapse.

The city spokesman said that both of the other victims were employees at the state-owned Agip Petroleum Company facility, who were on the grounds when the blasts occurred.

Judicial authorities meanwhile opened an investigation into the cause of the explosion, which the spokesman said experts still could not determine because it was impossible to approach the site.

The 5 a.m. Saturday blast shook nearby homes and surrounded them with choking black, prompting authorities to evacuate the area indefinitely.

The city spokesman said that between 1,500 and 2,000 people had been forced out of their

homes and that authorities were trying to arrange temporary housing for them at hotels.

The area most affected by the fire, about 10,000 square metres, is mostly industrial. City officials said they believe that the only home destroyed in the blast and fire was the one of the two women victims.

Nineteen people remained hospitalised Sunday. The others were treated mostly for smoke inhalation and cuts from flying glass and released from local hospitals, city and hospital officials said.

Some of the injured were passengers on a local train, many of those employees coming to work at the plant, which was near the facility when the explosion occurred. Windows shattered and passengers were violently shaken, authorities said.

A third Agip worker, Paolo Giordano, 35, was near his two colleagues when the blast occurred, but escaped with head injuries.

"The vacuum of air created by the explosion pushed me into a small building," Giordano told the news agency AGI. "My two colleagues were pushed by the same explosion in the direction of the flames."

ANSA quoted the wife of another Agip employee as saying, "We were awakened by three or four booms that sounded like thunder. My husband got up and went to the window. At that moment, there was the main explosion and all the surrounding walls collapsed."

The smoke that moved upwards in a thick black column spread over the city and a large area around Naples. However, according to Raffaele Capano, head of the province's environmental office, it poses no danger of toxic contamination.

GOREN BRIDGE

BY CHARLES GOREN
AND OMAR SALAM
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DEAR MR. GOREN

Q — There is great argument in our bridge circle about third-hand opening bids. Some of the players are opening any collection of 10 points and then blaming partner for getting them too high while something goes wrong. We would like to hear from you on this subject. E.R.L., Lincolnwood, Ill.

A — There is almost enough material here for a book, let alone a column. However, if I had to sum up my view of the subject, it would boil down to:

"When you open in third seat with sub-minimum values, always remember that you are doing so despite the fact that you don't have the values for an opening bid, not because you don't have them!"

Whenever you open the bidding, partner will presume that you have a full opening bid and base his responses on that premise. It is the third-hand opening bidder's duty to inform his partner that he does not have an opening bid. He does so by passing at his next turn unless his partner forces by making a jump shift.

That gives rise to another "rule" for opening light. You must be ready to pass any response by partner. Let's consider two hands:

1) ♠ 5 ♥ A J 5 4 2 ♦ Q J 6 5 ♣ J 7 6 5 2
2) ♠ 7 6 3 ♥ 9 7 2 ♦ A K Q 6 ♣ 8 5 4

Both hands have 9 high-card points and the first hand also has two distributional points. Yet if I

were going to open light in third position I would do so with hand 2! but not with hand 1! Why? Because a one heart opening bid would have little lead-directing purpose since any other suit might be better, depending on partner's holding. In addition, should partner respond to one heart with one spade, I would not know what to do. If I bid again, I promise a full opening bid; if I pass, we must be in the worst spot.

By contrast, little harm, and a considerable amount of good, could come out of opening hand 2! with one diamond. No matter what partner responds, you can pass. If the opponents buy the hand, you certainly want a diamond lead and nothing else. It is almost certain that the opponents can't make a low-level penalty double of diamonds. Also, the bid could inhibit the opponents from reaching three or trump since it is quite possible that either has a sure diamond stopper.

Q — Are you in favor of a negative one diamond response to a one club opening bid, just in case partner has a "convenient" short-suit club opening bid? J.D., Omaha, Neb.

A — Unless you are playing a strong club system, I am against bidding one diamond as a negative response. There is nothing wrong with the old-fashioned way of showing a weak hand — pass.

